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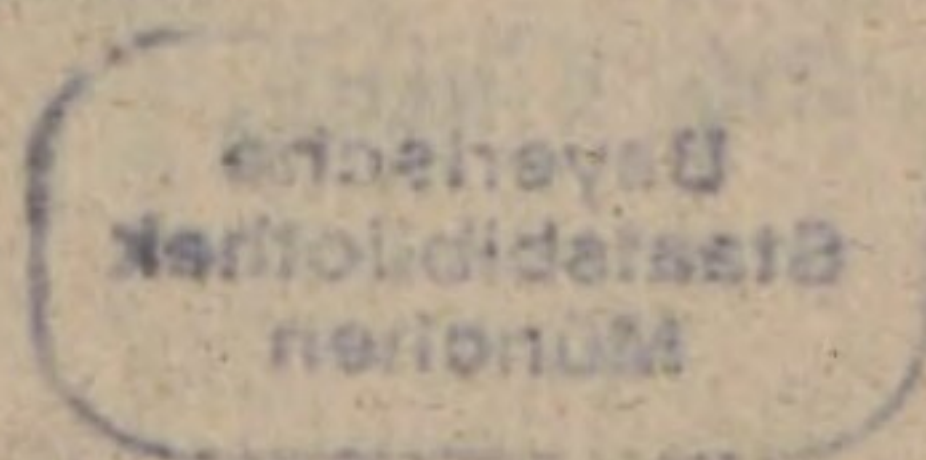


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MEMOIRS
OF
T. WILKINSON.
VOL. IV.



MEMOIRS

HIS OWN LIFE,

BY
TATE WILKINSON,

PATENTEE OF THE PATENT FOR THE INVENTION OF THE

IN FOUR VOLUMES

—IF I HAD HELD MY PEN BUT HALF AS WELL AS
I HAVE HELD MY BOTTLE—WHAT A CHARMING
HAND I SHOULD HAVE WRITTEN BY THIS TIME!

VOLUME

YORK

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

By WILSON, SPENCE, and MANNING,

And sold by G. G. J. and J. Robinson, Paternoster-Row;

And T. and J. Egerton, Whitehall, London.

Anno 1800
Bayerische
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München

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OF
HIS OWN LIFE,

BY
TATE WILKINSON,
PATENTEE OF THE THEATRES-ROYAL, YORK & HULL.
IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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I HAVE HELD MY BOTTLE—WHAT A CHARMING
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Anno 1790.

MEMORIAL

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MEMOIRS

OF

TATE WILKINSON.

I HAVE been told I could prevent riotous proceedings.—But I must beg leave to observe, that theatrical opinions are so variable, unsettled, and prejudiced, that I fear my reasons will have as little effect as if I were to entreat that all methodists would follow the playhouse, or that methodists could persuade all play attendants to become devotees at the tabernacle.

The good government that prevails in general at Drury Lane and Covent Garden theatres is owing to uniformity ; decorum begets decorum. Consequently the strict order to be found in the London audiences does not owe its happy preservation entirely to three or four constables in waiting, or to ten or twelve of the King's guards.

Witness the great riot on the Chinese Festival at Drury Lane, in spite of the sanction of his Majesty King George the Second, who was there in person.

Another instance.—When the French actors were to have performed at the Haymarket theatre, Justice Du Veil, attended by constables, and reinforced with the King's guards, were defeated by numbers and determined phrenzy; then, truly, might overcame right.

Nay, yearly at Christmas holidays in London, on retrospection, the plays are indistinctly and with difficulty got through.

On an uproar, when Lady Coventry and several other persons of quality were obliged to quit the stage-box, on account of a supposed affront given to Miss Bellamy in Juliet, it was the audience and not any other force compelled those disturbers to leave the theatre.

In 1754, when Captain Smith of the guards gave offence on the first night Mr. Murphy appeared in Jaffier, and only his second character on the stage, it was the general voice that would not permit the play to proceed till the cause of interruption was removed.

At York formerly, on a Shrove Tuesday, merely from a savage custom, the upper gallery was so noisy from numbers, that it could not be conquered but by raising the price on that night, and

which has by the experiment in a great measure removed the evil.

I beg leave to be here understood as speaking of theatres in general; but when the propriety of London is singled out, let it be well recollected that *the audiences there preserve their own respect*; for the instant the curtain draws up all noise subsides, and every person sits down; nor will they suffer the actors to proceed if a hat remains on a head: but in most country theatres, when the performance begins, the vgazers in the galleries stand up, and with their hats on; nay hats are too often seen on in the pit.

If at London a rioter is vociferous in the gallery, they are from custom and good regulation so habituated to order and necessary attention, that the offender is by *universal* consent delivered over to the constables, who not only conducts the culprit out of the gallery, but if guilty of throwing bottles, &c. on the stage, or into the pit or boxes, he is conveyed before a justice to be properly punished. A disturbance there, even of a short duration, seldom happens in the pit; for the instant of interruption the person is removed by force, and turned out with disgrace and ignominy.

To repeat more as to myself concerning the winter at Edinburgh in 1765 would not only be ~~useless~~ and impertinent, but is far from being

necessary, nor would it be entertaining. I acted a variety of characters, and suffice it to say I was well received, and met with great civilities and indulgences: Richard, Bayes, and Foote's pieces were repeated. My first benefit, on Friday, March 22, was a fine house: Alexander was revived, with a triumph, &c. at the managers' expence, and a farce written by Mr. Chaigneau, of Dublin, called Harlequin Soldier, taken from the French. My second benefit was the last night in the season, Saturday, April 13, another play, never acted there, called Coriolanus, with a new burlesque farce in two acts, wrote by Dr. Schombergh of Bath, called Bucephalus: The play pleased much—the farce not at all—though after playing Coriolanus I produced myself as Princess Statira. In a few days I engaged to proceed with the managers and company to Glasgow, where my bargain was chiefly dependent on two clear benefits, and full of hopes that a second fire would not be wickedly put into practice, or even attempted, as had been the year before. Most of the same plays acted at Edinburgh were ready, and repeated at Glasgow. My first benefit was upwards of 62 l. The play was Henry the Fourth; Falstaff, Mr. Lancaster; Prince of Wales, Mr. Aickin; Hotspur, Mr. Wilkinon: The farce I have forgot.—Lancaster was a great favourite at Edinburgh.

My second benefit was only 30l.—The Play was *Effex*: *Effex*, Mr. Wilkinson; with *Tragedy A-la-Mode*, &c.

The sensible, the friendly, the spirited, and the vivacious Mr. Sinclair (of whom York boasts as an honourable acquisition to its inhabitants) was that year at Glasgow college: I have had the pleasure of hearing him declare the first play he ever saw acted was the night I appeared in the difficult character of King Lear at the Glasgow theatre; and whether the performance was super-excellent or the contrary is not for me to determine: But I dare affirm (being the first impression made on his youthful mind) that he was highly delighted, and will never forget Wilkinson's Lear, let any actor's merit, how great soever, interfere on his sight and more enlightened judgment.

I do not recollect any circumstance worth relating in that trip to Glasgow, except my having the pleasure of being on a degree of intimacy with the worthy Mr. John Moore, known better by being called the good *Johnny Moore*; he was a gentleman (very extraordinary to say) that every body loved and respected. At his house I was often most agreeably entertained, and particularly whenever Mr. Nicholson Stewart and others paid him a visit, and came on a trip to see the play from Edinburgh. That said good character Mr.

Moore, is mentioned, not only by Mrs. Bellamy, but also by Doctor Smollet in his novel of Humphrey Clinker; all praised and loved him: and surely what every one said must be true. I returned from Glasgow to Newcastle, where my old friend Mr. Baker, manager of the York company, was stationed at the races at that town. It was their usual yearly service at that time for the summer season, till York meeting the latter end of August.

I acted Cadwalladar on the Saturday in the Newcastle race-week, and Major Sturgeon the Monday following.—I had indeed been secretly engaged by Mr. Baker for Newcastle (where I had never played till that time) before my departure from Glasgow. I continued at Newcastle (to the finishing of the season in August) at Mr. Parker's, the Turk's-Head in the Big Market, which house Mr. Baker for many years made his constant place of residence. All went smoothly on—we had a good race-week, a good assize-week, and several very good benefits.—Sir Francis Delaval came down that summer from the south to his seat of Seaton Delaval, built as I have been told under Sir John Vanbrugh's direction:—Mr. David Ross came there at the same time by the invitation of Sir Francis:—Sir John (now Lord) Delaval and his Lady were there; also Thomas Delaval, Esq; the younger brother; (and sorry am I to add, what

is well known, that when Sir Francis died I lost a valuable and honourable friend; the younger brother is also dead). So that with engagements at Sir Francis Delaval's, many invitations at Newcastle, where they are particularly hospitable, my time passed agreeably and profitably. I set myself a hard task preparatory to my own benefit, which was to finish the season, by getting up Mr. Macklin's favourite farce of Love A-la-Mode: With patience and assiduity it was a possible work, and promised much credit and cash:—To tell the truth I had by luck obtained the parts by the following method:—The part of Sir Archy I had to prepare myself in; Mr. Garrick sent it to me at Winchester in the year 1760; Squire Groom from my friend Ned Shuter; Mordecai from Mr. Creswick, who had acted the part at Covent Garden; the lady's part from Mrs. Burden's copy, who played it at the same theatre: So I had only to make the Irish character of Sir Callaghan, which by the frequency of seeing the farce, and the help of the first act being printed in a magazine, made it with a little trouble more than half ready to my hands; Sir Theodore, a part from remembrance; the rest of my own manufacture.

Mr. Macklin, it is true, was justifiably angry; but mine, for his credit, was better acted, and

more like his farce than the stuff given in every country town with purloined lines only: And Mr. Shylock to me proved himself no Jew, but a friend and a good Christian; he forgot and forgave, and occasionally favoured me with his permission to act the farce of Love A-la-Mode; though he after, jokingly, called me a great rogue. I could not but allow the justice of his accusation; I have often invited him to visit York; but he was always better pleased by my visiting him, and accepting his cheer, good-will, and kindness, than trying the experiment of my Yorkshire board.

I concluded at Newcastle with Love A-la-Mode. As the farce was got up with the care and the austerity almost of Mr. Macklin himself, had he been the inspector, it was received with an universal effect, almost equal to a London representation when that piece was in its highest estimation.—At Newcastle it was cast as follows: Sir Archy, Mr. Wilkinson; Sir Callaghan, Mr. Frodsham; Squire Groom, Mr. Creswick, &c. A crowded house, and from the flattering reception it was honoured with at that town, and indeed from the compliments I received there at that time, my vanity suggested I should be a lasting favourite; though I afterwards experienced a con-

trary temper, like the saying of friends, who are soon hot and as soon cold.

The York races (which in the year 1765 were in their great glory) made me imagine Love A-la-Mode would prove of the highest consequence there:—Good old Mr. Baker said, he could not be happy unless his adopted son Tate Wilkinson would oblige him by being at York that race-week; and he really treated me as a son, with one fault attending a partial father, which was, “All I did was right.” Mr. Baker’s liberality I had not the least occasion to doubt; and if without any emolument whatever my services could have pleased or served so worthy and kind a friend, they were sincerely at his command.—We came as father and son to his house at York, where in fact I was the *major domo*; and I said to I by itself I, I should do great things at the theatre from Love A-la-Mode, which would go down more pleasantly than my tea which they had not approved; and expected to be applauded as a Garrick, a Foote, and a Macklin, in the different characters: And here, good reader, you will observe a lesson for vanity, and as efficacious and as good a cure as are Spilsbury’s drops for the scurvy, or Godbold’s for a consumption.—I was so assured of success with Love A-la-Mode, &c. though when in May 1764 I had not thought of ever visiting York

again, notwithstanding I had left that city in tolerable favour that trip ;—and mark, good reader, that to Love A-la-Mode—thereby hangs a tale and eventful history.

The Monday in the race week I fixed on Cadwallader in the farce, as a part I was certain the York audience were partial to me in, and judged I was established in their opinions. (That year, 1765, was the second of the new theatre.) When at rehearsal that noon a message was sent to me, while on the stage, that several gentlemen desired to speak with me in Mr. Baker's dining-room ; I instantly obeyed the summons, (first desiring the performers to wait) and in imagination assuring myself it must certainly be a complimentary intended bespoke play, for my performing in some shining character the night following. When I made my entrance into the room, in high mirth and glee, where the gentlemen were, and was singing aloud——

York races are just now beginning,

The lads and their lasses are coming,

after my bow, and on the survey of features not recollecting one individual face there assembled, I naturally requested to be acquainted with the honour of their commands, as I was at that time busily engaged with my attention to the rehearsal

of the Author, a farce of Mr. Foote's, which was intended for that very evening; when a young gentleman quickly replied, "Sir, it is that very rehearsal and farce I came to put an immediate stop to;" then turning to Mr. Baker, said, "Sir, you need not be informed the York theatre is not licensed; and if you are not acquainted with another circumstance, I beg you will understand you are guilty of a double offence, by a flagrant breach of law and flying in the face of authority, as the impudent libel called the Author, written by that scoundrel Foote, was stopped from any future performance six years ago, in December 1758, and has not been permitted since.—My name, Mr. Wilkinson, is Aprice, and the character of Cadwallader, you mean to perform, is an affront to the memory of my father (who is now dead): As his son, by G—d, I will not suffer such insolence to pass either unnoticed or unpunished—therefore if at night you dare attempt or presume to play that farce, myself and friends are determined, one and all, not to leave a bench or scene in your theatre; so, Mr. Wilkinson your immediate and determinate answer."—I could only reply, refer to Mr. Baker, who was the manager and the proprietor; I was only on an engagement with that gentleman for the race week, and I should be guided by his opi-

nion and direction.——“Well, Mr. Baker,” said Mr. Aprice, “we wait your decision.”—The old gentleman spoke thus: “Why look ye, d’ye see, gentlemen, if so be that is the case, why as to the matter of that, Mr. Wilkinson, d’ye see me, must not act Cadwallader this evening.”——That, Mr. Aprice said, was all he requested, and added, that himself and friends would all attend the theatre that night, but expected no infringement to be made on the treaty, either by secret or offensive means, to cause an opposition after the manager’s word was given, then wished a good race week, and Aprice and his numerous association departed.

For some minutes Mr. Baker and I stood and gazed at each other like Gayless and Sharp after Kitty Pry’s departure—where one says, “O Sharp! Sharp!”—the other answers, “O master! master!”—But when recovered a little from the dilemma, what was to be done? that was the question!—To be or not to be? for I could not advance forward (the Author being a favourite farce) and say, “A party of gentlemen would not suffer it to be acted, for if it was they threatened a dangerous riot.”—Nor could we give out hand-bills and inform the public a performer was dangerously ill, who might immediately contradict it and assert his being in perfect health: So in

council it was agreed to be naturally stupid, say nothing, but substitute the Mayor of Garratt, and proceed with the farce, so changed, without any apology whatever.—It certainly was the strangest mode that ever was adopted, or that ever was suffered without momentous consequences, attended with strict inquiring and investigation.

The first scene between Sir Jacob Jollup and Mr. Lint the apothecary, the *astonished* audience sat, each staring in his fellow's face, like Shakespeare's blacksmith with his hammer up and swallowing a tailor's news, and concluded it was something new by Wilkinson foisted into the Author; but when I was announced as the Major, and made my entrance, the reader will not be surprised when informed I was received with an universal hiss.—I took no notice, but went on—The disapprobation continued, but not so virulently as to occasion a stand still; and the reader may be assured we lost no time in getting our work over, but wished for bed-time, and that all were well: for though I owed Heaven a debt, it is clearly evident it was not then due; and I was, like Falstaff, loath to pay before the day. At last the death of that day's life came on, the curtain dropped, and the poor Major Sturgeon sneaked away with marks of anger following at his heels, and sunk to bed to cover himself and his dishonour.

So ended the first lesson of the week, where I expected to have outdone my usual outdoings; but the greatest generals have met with disgraces and misfortunes.

Tuesday I acted the Lyar, which went off wonderfully well; I breathed better than in the morning, and felt once more a little elated. I had fixed on the Apprentice as the entertainment, which the summer before had done much for me in London; but unfortunately it happened to be a favourite part of Mr. Frodsham's, (who in truth did not play it well, but quite the contrary) and in that character I failed again, without a single hand to assist; I laboured through a part which in London I had been much flattered by applause in the extreme; my imitations were not known in Yorkshire, therefore naturally passed without the least effect:—The reader will smile at the pleasant week I had promised myself, but I fed on thin diet, that of hope, which I doubted not would give a brilliant and good ending after the bad beginning.

Wednesday, for my third performance, I intended Sir John Brute in the Provoked Wife—a favourite part in which I had been honoured with much approbation at Newcastle that summer.—The farce was the Upholsterer.—And as I had stood remarkably well in Dublin, in opposition even to that excellent actor Mr. Woodward, repeatedly in the

Tonfor, I judged my success could not be doubted; and indeed I was so like in voice, dress, and manner, it was a moot point which was which; but the cracking of nuts were the only tokens of approbation; and my *nerves* are irritated at the sound from that hour to the present. I was particularly attached to Sir John Brute, and think it was not improper for me as a comedian, as I had paid the strictest attention to Mr. Garrick in that part, and it might have been termed a lucky performance of mine. I had not studied it from my own suggestion, but first at the particular desire of Mr. *Johnny Moore* of Glasgow.

About twelve on the Wednesday, when I had finished the rehearsal of the Provoked Wife, a deputation of gentlemen were sent as ambassadors from the ladies assembled then at Giordani's concert.—York races were then in their high glory. Giordani was at that time under the patronage of Lady Bingley, who had great sway in that town and county, and was really enthusiastically musical: she settled 200*l.* a year on him; which annuity he enjoys to this day, and will to the end of his life.

The gentlemen who came from the rooms informed me and Mr. Baker, that Lady Bingley, and all the ladies assembled, sent their compliments; they wished that night to make a point of visiting the theatre before they went to the rooms, in or-

der to shew every encouragement to the manager, but it was with the proviso that so indecent a play as the Provoked Wife (which the ladies could not by any means countenance, and desired if their protection and patronage was worth consideration) might be changed to another comedy; but if their request was not complied with, they should not on any account enter the theatre, as they would not by any means think of setting out so improper a representation.—(Here was another bar against my rise to greatness at York, and from that fatal day my favourite part and play was almost exploded, and truly to my loss by its being expunged; for ladies to the boxes I never by any means could get to that well-wrote, entertaining piece, though I confess it has its blemishes.)—The ladies added, that as to the farce of the Upholsterer being altered it was very immaterial, as very few would continue after the play, but go to the rooms.—More comfort still for unfortunate Wilkinson!

Well! the command, as it might be termed, from the boxes, was likely and necessary to be obeyed, however mortifying it was to me; fresh bills were issued forth with every necessary information of the play being altered, at the universal desire of persons of distinction to Love in a Village, in which a lady of inimitable

talents and great musical abilities performed the part of Rosetta: She is now in a superior rank of life, by being united to a person distinguishable for his indefatigable talents, whose understanding has greatly added to the advantage of the commercial interest of the three kingdoms, and who is universally respected.—It is almost needless to add, the gentleman's name is Palmer, Comptroller of the General Post-Office. At that time York-races were remarkable for attracting the first families, not only of that immense county, but the kingdom at large; and York was then honoured with as many ladies of the first distinction as gentlemen.—But O what a falling off is there! O woe is me to have seen what I have seen, and seeing what I see.—The house was full, and the boxes were much crowded; and my only care for the evening was to prepare for the Barber—though most of the ladies and gentlemen would not wait to be SHAVED; but to those who did I was not much indebted for the compliment of their attendance, as too sure I had Pilgarlick's ill luck again; for as to my resemblance of Woodward it did not occur to one in a hundred, but it struck the fancy of the million that it was a part that appertained to their favourite Robertson, their darling, (and deservedly so for he was a comedian of true merit). But in regard to my playing

the Barber, it was not that night fortunate for me that I interfered with the Edwin or the Parsons of York stage on that occasion; and my dressing like Woodward, I was afterwards informed, was in every article of it contrary to the dress of Mr. Robertson; and as they pinned their faith upon his sleeve, why he was right, and I was judged wrong in every particular; therefore absurd and assuming in Wilkinson to attempt Mr. Robertson's part of the Barber; he would spoil it, and was impudent, ignorant, and deserved chastisement, and I quitted the stage the third night with an universal hiss and general marks of disapprobation:—It was to me a week of perplexity and woe! not pleasure, to so great a man as I had fancied myself.

The next day I accidentally stepped into a millener's shop, where a little elderly lady sat knitting in the corner, and without once looking at me on my entrance (or if she had she would *not* have known me) said, "Well, I am sure, Nanny, you never shall persuade me to go to the play again to see that hunch-backed Barber: Give me the Mourning Bride, and Mr. Frodsham, and then there is some sense in it: But for that man, that Wilkinson, as you call him, from London, pray let him go back and stay there, for he is the ugliest man I ever saw in my life; and so thought Jenny. I

am sure if he was worth his weight in gold he should never marry a daughter of mine."——

Miss Priestley, who knew me, looked confounded, and said, "My dear aunt, you would alter the severe opinion you are delivering to Nanny if you were to see Mr. Wilkinson in some of his principal characters; therefore, dear aunt Doughty, go some other night, and that gentleman will make a convert of you."——"No, that he never will,"

replied the old lady hastily, "for I shall never bear the sight of him again." I turned round to her,

and said, "Dear madam, do not be so very hard-hearted—try the theatre once more when *I* play, and I will exert my best abilities to make you amends and deserve your better sentiments."——

The old lady stared, down dropped the spectacles, the knitted garters followed, (which had busily employed her attention while speaking) and without a single word she took to her heels (which were nimble) and ran away out of the back door into New-street: I laughed immoderately: but with Miss Priestley the odd circumstance had not such a whimsical effect: She appeared much hurt, and genteelly apologized for Mrs. Doughty as not being a competent judge of plays, though a worthy woman, which indeed was her true character.

It is strange to mention (requesting an excuse for the being tedious on so trifling and unenter-taining a subject) the contrary effect my acting the Barber in the Upholsterer had on the same audience at a distant period from this unfortunate week in 1765.—Mr. Woodward, late in April 1771, played four nights at York; and on Saturday the 27th fixed for his benefit the part of Razor, and of course was applauded and approved. The season following I acted the Barber, and was received *as well* as, and pronounced not only like, but equal to, Woodward; which plainly proves the difference of being an established favourite or the contrary; and let the reader only ruminate how many actors in London, have voices that give a shock and seem discordant to the ear on first reception; yet if any one of those performers are blessed with sterling merit, (without which he will never succeed) and the tones become customary to the ears of the audience, the very voice, which at first gave disgust, from custom will in a few years become not only familiar but even agreeable, and rejoice the good hearers on the first distinguishable sound, even so distant as from behind the scenes; which little hint will be sufficient for a certain preparation to give shouts of welcome and applause, not

only from the gods, but every part of a charmed and a resounding theatre.

I must not forget to mention a very particular circumstance, which was the cause of my having related the foregoing accident, and shews how strangely things occur. Know then, reader, that in October 1768 (only three years after Mrs. Doughty's unfavourable opinion of me) with that said lady's own consent I actually was married to her daughter Jane, and have this year, 1790, still the honour and happiness to call that truly good woman my wife, and the Miss Priestley's I am proud to call my cousins.

Not having finished the career of that memorable race week, I must here register that Fortune had not ceased plaguing me with my performance of the Barber; for on the night following Mrs. Centlivre's play of the Busy Body was acted; Marplot, Mr. Frodsham: to which was added my highly-valued tower of strength, my Ville de Paris, called Love A-la-Mode.—Thundering applause and shouts of expectation had pleasingly disturbed my sleep the night before, with glorious vast ideas, such as expecting thanks, and being the topic of admiring conversation, for the *favour* Mr. Wilkinson had conferred on the town by so good and unexpected a feast as Mr. Macklin's Love A-la-Mode:—Indeed one material point was gained, for the theatre was crowded in every part.

The York audience then were particularly luke-warm as to applause, when compared to any other established theatre; for Mr. Woodward was so hurt the first night he acted at his reception, that I was under the necessity of calling on all my acquaintance the next day to assure them Mr. Woodward was so chagrined by their coolness as to reception and expressing admiration, he could not act so well as if on the London, Dublin, or Edinburgh stages:—They took the hint, and the next night he acted Bobadil and the Apprentice, and from the different mode was so surprised and elated, that he sat up till past two, after all his fatigue (aged 57) in the highest spirits. But that serenity is now altered, as if the children of another foil, and that sometimes even to the overdoing: More than three plaudits, however their admiration may be raised, in my humble opinion, destroys their own dignity, and three is full sufficient for any performer's greediness; beyond, enfeebles instead of strengthening the intended effect: For though I well know and feel that true applause is the life and soul that gives vigour to the player, and equal pleasure to the auditors, and is the cordial of all cordials, the true dramatic elixir, yet when too often repeated from mistaken zeal it becomes faint, and the in-

ended compliment sinks into a joke, and is rather a sarcastic than an honoured intention to a cool, tho' highly entertained, observer. A man may be wondered at for his swiftness in running a mile, which may occasion his trying to run two *swifter still*, but in the trial his reputation is lost, and the strict wary eyes become weary with looking on the same object so long.

But to return to Love A-la-Mode, in which the first scene being merely introductory, not any applause could have been extorted from any audience; silence and attention was all that could be required, and that was granted. The scene of the Jew (Beau Mordecai) followed next:—Not a smile; as I stood behind the scenes on the very tenter hooks of expectation my vanity attributed that only to the want of a little rousing and my desired appearance.—A rat-a-tat at the stage door, and now for it says I.—When I entered as Sir Archy, scarcely a hand!—My heart funk somewhere—no matter where. I said to myself, for comfort, assume courage——

'Tis not in mortals to command success:

I will do more—I will deserve it.

I tried and tried, but all in vain; the scene dragged, and grew more and more dull: Next came Sir Callaghan, whom I was truly glad to see, as

it relieved me from a heavy tedious courtship with the lady which did not promise much better success—any change, I trusted, would be for the better.—They gave applause on seeing Frodsham, and a few simpering smiles gave me a cheerer, and I judged all would be for the better. But when I as Sir Archy, and he as Sir Callaghan were left to ourselves in the quarrelling scene, which is truly well executed by the author, and very entertaining, instead of peals of laughter, which I had assured myself would follow, and to my speeches in particular, the full assemblage before us seemed as if by magnetism charmed into an evening's nap—all was hush—they appeared perfectly willing to grant leave for our departure—we ended the act, but not with any honours to grace the remembrance—and indeed by the turn of faces in the boxes, and almost in every other part, it was very perceptible the actors or the piece were by no means approved. It was plain by its effect how dull it appeared to them; and the cool treatment I met with was sufficiently grating to prevent a possibility of my being good company—a striking instance how much depends upon a first night's reception—for had they by general consent wished to have been pleased, laughed, and applauded, we should have acted better, and they would have relished and approved; but they were chilled

and disappointed from having expected too much, felt chagrined, and were slow as to giving the least encouragement; and it might truly be termed not Love A-la-Mode that night, but the farce of Cross Purposes. I for my own part, as an actor, never felt so severe a disappointment, and wished for the week over, as I could then take my leave of York for ever.

While the music was playing, preparatory to the second act, Frodsham flew eagerly to get relief from his fatal and false friend, the brandy bottle. I was not quite so rash, but was contented with sending for a bottle of Madeira, of which I took large and eager libations.——

If thus a man can die

Much bolder with brandy.

So I drink off this bumper, and now I can stand the
test,

And my comrades shall see that I die as brave as the
best.

Thus armed (after a tedious music) by the inspiration of the invincible spirit of wine, I felt bold, and sallied forth once more to take the field. I had to Frodsham confessed myself disappointed and hurt, however submissive resignation to the decrees of the Fates was indispensable; and as an honest witness on a trial often gives weight to the jury, so did I rest hopes on my Squire Groom's set-

ting all matters right; and I predicted, that when the curtain dropped I should be envious of his receiving all the honours and praises that would, from the part being so applicable to the week, insure good fortune. When Squire Groom made his *entrée* in his new dress and *aw* his pontificalibus, exactly as Mr. King had accoutred himself at London when he acted that part; why even there my hopes were frustrated, for his being dressed as a gentleman who had been riding his own match, gave offence instead of being pleasing to the gentlemen of the turf; it was sneered at as impertinently taking too great a liberty in the race week to have any freedom of character, or even to be permitted to pass, at a time when the whole dependence of the theatre rested on the resort of company that attended York races.—Squire Groom's scene was permitted to get through with difficulty—at the end of which, apparent disgust and weariness lessened the audience every minute, and then vanished all my pleasing prospect of profit and applause from my fancied treasure in possessing the celebrated farce of Love A-la-Mode; and as the people from all parts hastily retired, we were equally quick in bringing about the catastrophe, and were not under much terror or apprehension for the conclusion, as none were left except a few harmless gazers, that nei-

ther cared for the audience, the farce, nor the actors, but found themselves in the theatre they scarce knew how, and as peaceably departed they hardly knew why. Now let me speak in my own defence as to my merit in acting the part of Sir Archy: First, In the Scotch dialect I was very happy, having naturally a nice ear, and also repeated opportunities of improvement by having resided two winters in Scotland.—In that point I certainly had the advantage even of Mr. Macklin, yet not too Scotch for an English audience (for that may be possible), as an actor may pronounce Scotch too well for a London audience, and yet that would be exactly right at Edinburgh. I could speak Sir Archy without fear at Covent Garden theatre, but would not by any means attempt a Scotch character at Edinburgh, though I have been much honoured by their partiality; but at Newcastle, one hundred miles south of Edinburgh, I was accounted a good actor, as to the dialect, and would have seemed still better at York, and superior to York again if I acted the part in London; as the purity of the language is naturally less understood the more distant from the country, than in or on the borders of Scotland; and the performers in London, not acquainted with Yorkshire, substitute the Wiltshire dialect instead of the northern, which is

quite opposite: but to the London galleries the substitute answers full as well; as, *ise zure*, &c. fulfils every idea of a Cockney's common comprehension. As to my playing the character, I was perfect to a letter, and knew every other part, and had fully comprehended and executed Sir Archy in Mr. Macklin's manner—to do which I was competent: So the fault I may say, as to its being so unfavourably received, did not originate entirely from bad acting; in short, it was no more than a chain of ill-luck that at one time or another, in a greater or less degree, pervades nearly all, who in the catalogue of life's calendar pass for men; and I may venture to assert, without offence, that the public every where at times is a ticklish and dangerous dependence, and there is no standing on such reliance with firmness, as the soil is but a sandy foundation at the best.

I have seen Mr. Mossop, when in Dublin, have a crowded house, with his name the only one thought of in the whole play-bill; yet by the public being there glutted with too many good performers, and from the frequency of feasting at the temple of Parnassus, they grew surfeited; and after that, Mr. Mossop, aided by Mrs. Fitzhenry, and the well-known and admired Miss Catly, with an additional band, all combined, have performed to 51.

Before I had acted the farce of Love A-la-Mode at York, I assured myself it would be called for, and draw great houses on the Friday and Saturday following ; but the theatrical atmosphere continued dark, gloomy, and tempestuous, and I, after the storm was over, retired to bed, where I sulked most part of the following day.—I begged to be excused from any duty on the Friday : The Maid of the Mill was acted by Mrs. Mahon to a full house ; Mr. Robertson performed the Mock Doctor, and I had not seen the audience so truly entertained in the course of the week.

The Saturday we concluded with the Wonder : Felix, Mr. Frodsham ; to which I tacked the Minor, which was well received, and there I got much credit, as well as in the Lyar, that week ; and though I loved applause (for who does not), the medicine came too late.—I made my bow, the curtain dropped, and, as I judged, for positively the last time with Tate Wilkinson as a performer on that stage.—But, ah me ! our resolutions too much resemble April weather, and are a mere shadowy mixture of sunshine, clouds, and showers, and what we do determine oft we break. *And so and so* (as foolish Becky says) there ended my York race-week 1765, but not without a scourge for my vanity.—I inwardly said (and solemnly) “ Farewell, Old York, on

thee I turn my back, *there is a world elsewhere.*" I might truly say I had undergone a severe penance, although I had not lacked plenty of the good things of this world.

The York company set off on the Monday for Beverley, its usual place of residence at that time, for four or five weeks before the Hull season.—Mr. Baker (as he was fully convinced I had no temptation to allure me again into Yorkshire) behaved most liberally for my trouble during the race-week, and he wished, as I was in the country, that I would try a short season at Hull, which he augured would answer mutually for our advantage, and be much more profitable than at any other time, if I made a journey on purpose for Hull only.—Mr. Baker's arguments were feasible: Hull was a new spot, and I yielded to the temptation, and liked it better, as that place had the charms of enticing novelty to allure me.

We will here imagine the York company solacing themselves at pleasant Beverley, and myself idle, sulky, and full of chagrin at York, ruminating on the late disappointments, with all my vain glories tarnished, and fancied laurels withered.

Having descanted so long on theatrical subjects, I apprehend that many persons in Yorkshire, whether the old who have seen Mr. Frodsham,

or the young who have heard much of that gentleman, will be pleased with a description of him, I have therefore in this niche placed him; and that the almost surfeited reader, after patiently poring over so much playhouse matter, may either sit still and proceed with inspecting this poor monument, or lay down the book and seek a more pleasing or profitable recreation, I shall here give (according to my best recollection) a concise sketch of the once much-talked-of, and the now almost forgotten Frodsham, who was thirty years ago termed the York Garrick.

The abilities of that performer were unquestionable:—He was naturally a good actor in spite of himself; for tho' London improves and matures, and is the most enviable theatrical situation, yet genius will be found in every rank, foil, and station. Mr. Frodsham had a quick genius, aided by a liberal education: He was son of an ancient family in Cheshire, of the town of Frodsham, ten miles from Chester, being the half way between Wigan and Chester:—But his mind, his understanding, and superabundant good qualities, were all warped and undermined by nocturnal habits; which failings unfortunately were supplied by refreshing pulls at the brandy-bottle in the morning, to take off all qualms from the stomach, till the certain consequence ensued of be-

ing enfeebled, disordered, mad, dropfical, and dead at the age of thirty-five.—With proper cultivation he would have been a good substitute for Barry—I do not say that would have done in his latter state, but it would have been the case had he encountered London some years before he fell into such poisonous conduct to himself; and then he was the idol, which the remembrance of was the support of his fame on his latter years' performance. — He was awkward merely from the want of modelling, and worse, by being told, from his drunken inferiors, off the stage, that all he did was right: But had he been caught at a proper time, while wild, by such a man as Mr. Garrick, and that Mr. G. would have really taken pains with him, the York hero would have done honour to London. In my experience and best observation his Hamlet (and Jaffier still better) with all his eccentricity, I never saw equalled but by Mr. Garrick and Mr. Barry at that time; (and of that period I am speaking, not of the present day;) though Mr. Kembel's judgment may challenge what I say; as, besides *his* various excellencies in that character, where the play is performed in the third act, the execution is not only spirited, and possesses great feeling and fire, but the manner of conceiving those passages, and conveying them to the audi-

ence, is superior by Mr. Kemble to that of any other actor's whatever in my remembrance.—But I am now speaking of an exuberant rude flower of the drama, possessed of voice, with melody and merit, all considered to an eminent degree: He had strong feelings, and tears at will; and had he been a few years under the correction of a London audience, and attentive to his good advisers, he would in all probability, long before this, have been in his meridian, and at this time a setting-sun. There is a coarse picture at York in the print-shops, of which portrait I cannot say the same of more expensive ones; for it not only is very like his person, attitude, &c. but is what a picture of real worth should be—it is a strong conveyance without giving elegance, which he by no means ever attained, though his admirers allowed him certainly what he had not; and the said trifling print does not make him *outré* as to awkwardness, but it just conveys him in Frodsham's manner and mode as an actor. One of the strongest likenesses I ever was surprised with was when favoured with a sight of Mr. Garrick's picture, at full length, in the character of Richard the Third, at Sir Watkin William Wynn's, St. James's-Square:—I turned suddenly round, and was actually astonished—for there I saw my old master just as I had seen him in his life-time.

Mr. Powell of London, who the stage had cause to lament, is the nearest assimilation I can give of Frodsham. Mr. Powell had the opportunity of strictly observing real artists, Garrick, and Barry, in all their modes and shapes of grief—Inattentive Frodsham unhappily was his own master, and a careless one; for though he set himself difficult tasks, he only now and then pursued the trump of fame with ardency or alacrity, but lagged, and never reached the goal, though a very little spurring and jockeyship would have made him come in first, and won many a theatrical plate. The public were so infatuated (and indeed he was so superior) that he cast all others at a distance in his York situation; and the audience too blindly and too partially (for his good) approved all he did beyond comparison; and when in full pride, before he wilfully sunk himself, I do not think any actor but Garrick would have been liked so well; and even Garrick, not without some old maids' opinions at a secret cabal, where Frodsham would have been voted superior, and under the rose appointed the man for the ladies: Nor would that decision in favour of Frodsham have been from elderly ladies only, as he had often melted the youthful fair ones of the tenderest moulds, whose hearts have been susceptible whenever Frodsham was the lover. It was by no means a fortunate

circumstance for that young gentleman to be so much superior to all the rest of the York company: No actors of high degree were at that time ever known those boards to tread, nor was he ever more than ten days in London. Thus situated at 1l. 1s. per week salary, Frodsham had not any opportunity for observation or improvement:—no infringement was suffered, or change of characters. Nay, so tenacious was old Mr. Crisp*, that it was some time, I believe, before he could be prevailed upon to resign Hamlet to Frodsham and act the ghost. Crisp kept Richard, Frodsham acted Richmond—Crisp, Sir John Brute, Frodsham merely Colonel Balby. Frodsham, besides his tragic abilities, acted some such parts as Lord Hardy, Young Bevil, Lord Townly, Sir George Airy, sung very tolerably, and was a very decent Macheath. About thirty-two years ago he obtained a fortnight for holidays, which occasioned great lamentations at York, for they were certain if Mr. Garrick saw Frodsham it would be a woe-ful day for the York stage. He not only was young and vain, but self-opinionated to a super-abundant degree. When in London he left a card at Mr. Garrick's house, "Mr. Frodsham of York," with the same ease and facility as if it had

* An old actor at York.

been the first gentleman from Yorkshire. Mr. Garrick judged this card of a *country stroller* very easy and very extraordinary, and from the sample wished to see the York actor, who had accordingly admittance the ensuing day; and after a slight conversation, during which Garrick was astonished at the young man's being so very free and affable, particularly on any subject pertaining to Shakspeare's plays, &c. and still with a procrastination that Garrick was not accustomed to, or by any means relished a compliance with, he delayed, every minute expecting that Frodsham would present his petition to be heard, and receive his *commendation* from Garrick's eye of favour: But this obsequious request not being made, Garrick urged present business, and presented the York Romeo with an order for the pit, desiring him that night to favour him with attendance to see him perform Sir John Brute, accompanied with an invitation to breakfast the ensuing morning—at the same time asking him, "Pray now, have you seen a play since your arrival in London?"—"O yes," quickly answered Mr. Frodsham, "I saw you play Hamlet two nights ago;" to which he added it was his own favourite character.—"Well," says Garrick, "pray now, how did you approve, Frodsham? I hope I pleased you:" for that night he had judged his performance a

lucky hit.—Frodsham replied, “O yes, certainly, my dear Sir, vastly clever in several passages; but I cannot so far subjoin mine to the public opinion of London, as to say, I was equally struck with your whole performance in that part.”——I do not conjecture that any actor who spoke to Garrick ever so amazed him.——Garrick stammered and said, “Why—why now, to be sure now, why I suppose you in the country—Pray now, Mr. Frodsham, what sort of a place do you act in at York? Is it in a room, or riding-house, occasionally fitted up?”——“O no, Sir, a theatre upon my honour.”——“O sure, why my Lord Burlington has said that; why will—will you breakfast to-morrow, and we will have a trial of skill, and Mrs. Garrick shall judge between us, ha, ha, ha, now, I say.—Good day, Mr. York, for I must be at the theatre, so now pray remember breakfast.” Frodsham promised he would, and made his exit. And though Garrick himself told me the circumstance, and truly laughed then, yet I am certain at the time he had been greatly piqued, astonished, and surprised at so strange a visit from a country actor; yet wishing to satisfy his curiosity, had done it for once at the expence of his pride and dignity. The following day arrived the York hero at *Palais Royale* in Southampton-street, according to appointment—breakfast finished with Ma-

dam Garrick as good superintendant, waiting with impatience, and full of various conjectures why the *poor* man from the country did not take courage and prostrate before the foot of majesty, humbly requesting a trial, engagement, &c. ; but as Frodsham did not, as expected, break the ice, Garrick did.—“ Well, Mr. Frodsham, why now, well, that is, I suppose you saw my Brute last night?—Now no compliment, but tell Mrs. Garrick ; well now, was it right?—Do you think it would have pleased at York? Now speak what you think !” —“ O !” says Frodsham, “ certainly, certainly ; and, upon my honour, without compliment, I never was so highly delighted and entertained—it was beyond my comprehension : But having seen you play Hamlet first, your Sir John Brute exceeded my belief ; for I have been told, Hamlet, Mr. Garrick, is one of your first characters ; but I must say, I flatter myself I play it almost as well ; for comedy, my good Sir, is your *forte*.—But your Brute, d—n it, Mr. Garrick, your Brute was excellence itself ! You stood on the stage in the drunken scene flourishing your sword ; you placed yourself in an attitude—I am sure you saw me in the pit at the same time, and with your eyes you seemed to say, “ Damn it, Frodsham, did you ever see any thing like that at York? Could you do that, Frodsham?” (and it

is possible that last remark was a just one.) The latter part of this harangue of Frodsham's possibly went not so glibly down as the tea at breakfast; and the ease and familiarity with which it was accompanied and delivered, not only surprised, but mortified Garrick, who expected adulation and the bended knee——

Where thrift might follow fawning.

Mr. Garrick not only loved, but eagerly swallowed flattery with a conjurer's avidity, with, hey! pass and be gone; and had it daily served up not only by inferiors, equals, and dependents, but by persons of higher rank: Therefore to hear a country actor speak slightly "touching his Lord Hamlet," was too much to bear, and, as Sir Archy says, "was vary new." After much affectation of laughter, and seemingly approving all Frodsham had uttered—"Well now, hey! for a taste of your quality—now a speech, Mr. Frodsham, from Hamlet; and, Mrs. Garrick, "bear a wary eye." Frodsham, with the utmost composure, spoke Hamlet's first soliloquy without any idea of fear or terror, or indeed allowing Garrick, as a tragedian, a better Hamlet, or superior to himself, Garrick all the while darting his fiery eyes into the soul of Frodsham, a custom of Garrick's to all whom he deemed subservient, as if he meant to

alarm and convey from those eyes an idea of intelligence to the beholder of his own amazing intellects. Garrick certainly possessed most extraordinary powers of eye, as they contained not only the fire and austerity he meant to convey, but his simplicity in *Scrub*, and archness of eye in *Don John*, was equally excellent and as various:— On *Frodsham*, the eye of terror had no such effect; for if he had noticed and thought Mr. Garrick's eyes were penetrating, he would inwardly have comforted himself his own were equally brilliant, if not superiorly so. When *Frodsham* had finished Hamlet's first speech, and without stop, *To be or not to be*, &c. Garrick said, "Well, hey now! hey! you have a smattering, but you want a little of my forming; and really in some passages you have acquired tones I do not by any means approve." *Frodsham* tartly replied, "Tones, Mr. Garrick! to be sure I have tones, but you are not familiarized to them. I have seen you act twice, *Hamlet* the first, and I thought you had odd tones, and Mrs. Cibber strange tones, and they were not quite agreeable to me on the first hearing, but I dare say I should soon be reconciled to them."—"Why now," says the much astonished wondering Garrick, "nay, now that is—why now really *Frodsham*, you are a d——d queer fellow—but for a fair and full trial of your genius my stage

shall be open, and you shall act any part you please, and if you succeed we will then talk of terms.” “O!” says Frodsham, in the same flighty flow of spirits, “you are mistaken, my dear Mr. Garrick, if you think I came here to solicit an engagement; I am a Roscius at my own quarters! I came to London purposely to see a few plays, and looking on myself as a man not destitute of talents, I judged it a proper compliment to wait on a brother genius: I thought it indispensable to see you, and have half an hour’s conversation with you—I neither want nor wish for an engagement; for I would not abandon or relinquish the happiness I enjoy in Yorkshire for the first terms your great and grand city of London could afford;” and with a negligent wild bow made his exit, and left the gazing Garrick following his shade, like Shakspeare’s ghost, himself standing in an attitude of surprise, to ruminare and reflect, and to relate this account of the strangest mad actor he had ever seen, or ever after did see. Mr. Garrick told me these particulars himself, and a narrative much of the same purpose I had from Mr. Frodsham when I became acquainted with him in Yorkshire. Mr. Garrick declared he never beheld such a strange mixture of merit and genius, as in that *eccentric* Frodsham; and Frodsham, without any idea of offence, weakly judged that

his fame was equally known with the other great man's; and he was determined such an established actor as the York idol should not be deemed rude by being in London and not visiting his brother Hamlet's altar. Frodsham's remarks were rude, and not true, relative to tones; for Mr. Garrick spoke Hamlet as naturally and void of particular tones as ever was heard, his voice being remarkably harmonious, strong, and pleasing, though in his hesitation and repetition, off the stage, he threw it into an affected manner, which habit had formed into nature. As to Mrs. Cibber's Ophelia, though I have seen many good ones I have not seen her like, nor ever expect it, as her singing, voice, figure, and features, all combined, will never let me bury in oblivion her remembrance.—

They all wither'd when my poor father died.

Methinks I see her now!

Where?

In my mind's eye, Horatio.

But tones, until familiarized, may prevent favourite comedians, till their merit is established, from having their voice relished and approved. When I first heard Mr. Quick his voice did not much please me: Now I never hear the sound of it, even from behind the scenes, but I am as eager as any other attendant involuntarily to laugh, it

has to me so whimsical and very agreeable an effect. With the tragedian this apparent difficulty is not so easily got over: Ryan's voice was bad to a degree, so was Mrs. Woffington's: Ryan, by having merit and worth, was sanctioned; and Mrs. Woffington, by the aid of beauty and merit, was a great favourite in *Jane Shore*, *Lady Jane Gray*, &c. &c.; but these are wonderful hazards to encounter.

Before I quit Mr. Frodsham's mode of behaviour at London, I must inform the reader, that the said harum-scarum young gentleman, unless he waited on Johnny Rich of Covent Garden theatre, that manager he feared would arraign him of being deficient in point of good-breeding, otherwise he had not the least inclination to bestow an hour on that gentleman; as he had been informed Mr. Rich's genius was superficial, and supposing he neither understood plays, Greek, nor Latin, but encouraged pantomime only, he held him in the greatest contempt.—Indeed the applause at York he commanded, and received from every alehouse, had intoxicated his brain as much as the plentiful potations of *York burgundy*, with which, and other pleasant spirited draughts, he too soon finished his early days of life and fame: He had by the lower people been so loaded with more fancied honours than he could carry, that he had not a serious after-reflection or

thought to inform him he had acted wrong in his deportment, manners, and behaviour to Mr. Garrick : He knew Garrick's great fortune, and his own *no fortune at all*, but allowed no professional superiority in talents, &c. ; and when he spoke to Mr. Garrick, he said, he of course supposed that Mr. Garrick knew he was speaking to as good a gentleman as himself, and an actor on much the same footing of merit : For the bravos and encouragement he received in his best days at York were certainly flattering ; and from those causes, combined with his own self-opinion, had confirmed to him that he was secure of the highest opinion from all the nobility of England, because a few saw him in a York race-week. With Rich he met with a very different reception from that of the Drury Lane patentee : He found him teaching a young lady to act, with three or four cats about him. After his being some time in the room, when announced, Rich viewed him through a very large reading-glass, took his snuff, and said, " Well, Mr. Frogsmire, I suppose you are come from York to be taught, and that I should give you an engagement : Did you ever act Richard, Mr. Frogsmire ? " — " Yes, Sir. " — " Why then you shall hear me act, " says Rich : — when he spoke a speech in a most ridiculous manner : And on its being concluded, Frogsham pettishly told him he

did not visit him nor come from York to be taught, nor to hear him act; he came (like Lord Chalkstone) merely for a little conversation, and to view his Elysian fields. But as Mr. Rich loved leisure, and had little curiosity, he replied, that unless *Must*er Frogsmire would with humble attention hear his Richard, he would not hear Mr. Frogsmire at all. Frodsham was preparing to make an exit, while Rich was ruminating and proceeding with——

’Twas an excuse to avoid me!

Alas she keeps no bed!

When he was suddenly interrupted by Mr. Frodsham with, “I wish you good morning!” and so ended unthinking Frodsham’s second managerial visit.——He returned to Ebor’s plains, and was joyfully received there.——He was not forgot by Garrick, as he often, to his performers, related the story of that *mad York actor*, as he termed him: And Rich, without thinking of any such trifling occurrence, continued teaching young pupils to act, stroked his cats, and the York Roscius was never more by him remembered.

The last night Frodsham, ever spoke on the stage was in October 1768. After playing Lord Townly, and though in apparent great spirits, he died within three days after.——“Ladies and gentlemen,

on Monday evening *Coriolanus* : To which will be added (looking seriously, and laying his hand a on his heart)

What we must all come to.

Which expression will serve as a pause to my imperfections and digressions, and afford my reader a leisure for five minutes reflection.

I will here take it for granted, that the reader has ruminated on giddy Frodsham's exit from the world's stage, and once more resume my discourse to inform the peruser, that during my few days retirement at Mr. Baker's, after the races, I received the favour of an invitation from Mr. Whitely, director of the Doncaster theatre, requesting I would perform a few nights there after the races, as himself and troop were to attend that meeting, and continue some weeks afterwards. The offer exactly tallied with my plan for convenience, as it filled up the space until I should be wanted at Hull, and also would add grist to my mill. I continued with good Mr. Baker at my house (or rather his) at York, till I went to Doncaster, and he stayed with me till then, out of compliment, for he usually was with the company. I went, and Mr. Whitely gave bills with a long puff of "Walk in and see the wonderful great actor he had engaged

from London, Dublin, Edinburgh, &c." I acted there three weeks. Miss Whitely was the young heroine, a very pretty and handsome young lady; she promised well as an actress, but thank her stars she is much better provided for than being obliged to rely on the stage. She married Mr. Goslin of Stamford, where she is happily situated, and is just as irresistible a woman now as she was a girl then. During my continuance at Doncaster I lived entirely with Mr. Stanuel, who at that time kept the Green Dragon, and to whose civilities I was greatly indebted and have never forgot; and I am glad of this public opportunity to acknowledge them, and present my thanks to him. Mr. Stanuel now moves on a larger scale, and in a more exalted sphere, as he is master of an elegant and much improved inn, well known (and genteelly supported) under the name of the Red Lion.

My benefit play there was the Merchant of Venice; my Tea, and Duke and no Duke. It was particularly honoured, with not only being very full, but all the genteel families came on that occasion to our little theatre; and no wonder, for besides the compliment paid to me, Sir George Cooke's mother (who was much beloved by all the families in Doncaster and its neighbourhood) did me the honour unasked to patronize my play. Sir George Cooke lives at Wheatly, near Donca-

ster: His own lady inherits every virtue and endearing quality, which demands and receives universal respect, esteem, and admiration.

I returned back to York, and then posted next day for Beverley, where my friend Mr. Baker waited for me, and after that ceremony escorted me to Hull, which was early in the month of November, 1765.—My first appearance was in *King Lear*. I had every reason to be pleased, not only from the attention and warm applause of the audience, but from the civilities paid me by several of the leading inhabitants. I studied *Zanga*; which character was not only there, but after that at *York*, generally looked on as my master-piece in tragedy; and notwithstanding the variety of principal performers, it is equally spoken of, and flatteringly allowed to be, more than a performance of mediocrity at this day.

As I have mentioned civilities at that time with which I was favoured at Hull, Mr. Melling I am sure will pardon the liberty I presume on, when I beg leave to mention his name with that respect, esteem, and gratitude, which from me, and every one who knows him, is truly his due. He is a gentleman whom all must revere, and the common enemy of man cannot be so devilish as to hate, though he cannot but envy. I glory in having an opportunity to express my heart-felt

esteem—it is just to give applause where it is deserved : Indeed I wish not to be fulsome with panegyric, for to strangers it is of no use ; and to those who are so happy as to be acquainted with that gentleman it is needless, as they well know and must feel the truth of my assertions : Self-love and vanity must partly plead my excuse with Mr. Melling here, as I wish to inform the world, that that worthy good man I boast of was my particular friend from the year 1765 to this day : He has ever been anxious and happy to serve me.— Though no youngster, he is esteemed and revered by the young as well as the old, and has proved to me a second Mr. Chaigneau. If I were to write his epitaph, I would place the following lines of Lord Lyttleton's on his tomb-stone, which I hope for years will not be wanted, for the sake of his friends, and Mr. and Mrs. Dorrington.

No party his benevolence confin'd,
No sect ; alike it flow'd to all mankind.
He lov'd his friends (forgive this gushing tear !
Alas ! I feel I am no actor here !)
He lov'd his friends with such a warmth of heart,
So clear of int'rest, so devoid of art,
Such gen'rous freedom, such unshaken zeal,
No words can speak it, but our hearts may tell
A sympathising love of others bliss !
Where will you find another's mind like his ?

Hull for hospitality and plenty of good cheer, with too much welcome, intitles that town, in my opinion, to the appellation of "The Dublin of England."—The many acts of kindness I received in that friendly seat, occasions my being oftener in bad health at Hull than at any other place in my yearly round. An odd circumstance happened at Kingston which seemed to promise good luck, but was the cause of unfortunate disaster: My flattering introduction at that place occasioned my being introduced to a Colonel Appleton at Beverley; and, strange to relate! that seeming honour occasioned my losing the little jewel Beverley from the crown of my York imperial diadem.—It was usual for the comedians, as before related, after the York races to halt at Beverley for a short space. To the southern reader it may not be amiss to inform such lady or gentleman, that Beverley is not a town of trade, but like York is chiefly supported by the genteel private families that reside there in a continuance: York is thinned as to resort of company, (public weeks excepted) unless the latter part of the winter season, near the Lent assizes. I cannot boast of any permanent intimacies with superior persons at Beverley, beyond a kind of summer friendship, that with the least gust drops off. I lost that genteel place of residence owing to what I will here faithfully

relate ; (tho' not strictly according with the time of what occurred near the period I am recording of Hull, as my misfortune happened in 1771, when all my theatres were greatly supported.)—At that time my lease at Beverley was nearly expired :—I was up to the ears in building a new theatre at Leeds, and in the interim, for experiment, tried Beverley and Hull races while the Leeds mansion was finishing ; when, to my astonishment, and every person's equal surprise, I was ordered by Colonel Appleton, then mayor, (notwithstanding strong application from ladies, and the officers of the East Riding militia then assembled) to march bag and baggage out of the town—an insult and disgrace, I believe, never offered to any regular company in this world, and in a place where certainly so well established, and good a company of comedians was a feather of honour rather than the contrary ; as from its situation they never can have a company of fixed or superior estimation.—However, my royalty of patents, with York in one hand, and that of Hull in the other, could not melt nor soften an obdurate rock, or prevail with that upright judge to deviate so far as to wink at a breach of law by suffering a naughty play at Beverley, tho' he had evidently gone nine miles from Beverley to Hull for the purpose of seeing one, at which time Hull was not a patent theatre.—But as lawless as

its neighbour, where he exercised his supreme authority; the result was, I maintained the company for three weeks without their being permitted to act in my own theatre, which of course amounted to a considerable sum. Why a gentleman, whom I never to my knowledge offended, but held in respectful esteem, should have used me thus oppressively, and trampled on a sufferer, as it exacted from me an enormous expence, bordering on *one hundred pounds*, (perhaps, indeed, had I urged that sensitive point, *my money*, some feeling might have found passage for the strolling plaintiff,) has been from that time to this inexplicable, unless the following circumstance was his grand motive and reason for such ungentleman-like, and, indeed, such cruel behaviour, which surely can only be accounted for as owing to that strange turn, too often seen, felt, and experienced, from a despotic and proud disposition.

Two years before, the said Colonel had desired to have a row in a stage box for my benefit at Hull—the places were set down, but the Colonel had not, as was, and is the usage, sent a servant to secure them; and it was, and is also, the custom, that at the end of the first act of a play none can be kept for any rank or degree whatever. The Colonel did not arrive till the second act was performing, consequently his seats were filled up;

and though the ladies and gentlemen in the boxes offered to make him every convenience he would not accept it, but was highly enraged and offended at what in fact was entirely his own fault:—He declared he would not continue a minute longer in the theatre, and departed instantly, swelling with dignity almost even to the bursting, and vowing vengeance on the Wilkinson—the which he put in execution in the manner I have related—and it has often brought good Shakspeare's lines as applicable to that powerful magistrate——

———Oh! 'tis excellent
To have a giant's strength! but it is tyrannous
To use it like a giant.

———O, but man! proud man!
Dressed in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he's most assur'd,
His glassy essence, like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heav'n
As make the angels weep.

If what I have now recorded respecting the treatment I undeservedly received, yet myself only to pay the piper, be in the slightest particle false, I will, against my own self-partiality, admit he was *perfectly right*; and it will be my real temper and pride to retract and acknowledge error, or any deviation from the strictest rectitude.

After my safe escape from Colonel Appleton's magisterial authority, with my baggage waggons, &c. to Hull races, without capture, where I was received with welcome, I have looked upon it as a duty for the Beverley residents to be here made acquainted with the true motives which compelled me to abandon that spot; as I have for several years been much indebted to the inhabitants of that town, of every degree, for their frequent visitations to the Hull theatre, particularly on my own benefit night; for let the weather prove ever so discouraging, there always has been several persons of every description on that occasion.

My benefit at Hull on my *first visit* in December 1765 was flattering to a degree; not a place in the boxes to be purchased but with as much difficulty as if Mr. Garrick was to have acted; so I may vaunt of "O the days when I was young." My play was *The Orphan of China*, which had never been acted there: My dish of Tea, at which there were no qualms, misconceptions, or abuse—all went down glibly—The farce was *Love A-la-Mode*—But the difference of representation, and the opinion of the Hull audience, was so indulgent *that night*, as made me feel overpaid for the vexations and mishaps that attended my performing *Sir Archy* at York. I made my best bow, my best speech, and from the front of the house to

the performers behind the curtain, there was an instance of mutual harmony; and not one amongst them was more pleased than my good genius Mr. Baker, with whom I went accidentally to York, meaning to pass one week, and bid, in all probability, that place an eternal adieu as an actor.

I had engaged on my own terms with Mr. Ivory, the proprietor, for the whole season at Norwich, till the benefits commenced at that town. My quarters were secured in the London coach, my baggage all packed, and I was near the eve of my departure from York city that January 1766, being the last place of wishing to stay at, or even to design visiting in future. On the Thursday several gentlemen waited on Mr. Baker, hearing I was in York, and informed him that many ladies and gentlemen would esteem themselves much indebted to Mr. Wilkinson's politeness if he would assist the charity for the boys and girls, play on the following Saturday, and favour them so far on that night as to oblige them with the farce of Love A-la-Mode, and perform Mr. Macklin's character of Sir Archy Mac Sarcastm. Reader, are you not thunder-struck!—but rest satisfied it is no more strange than true. Mr. Baker referred the gentlemen to me, very properly observing he had no right to make any request of the kind—the which ceremony they paid me. I was then

traversing the stage as a noon walk—there they repeated their petition. In answer I urged the inconvenience, and that my journey, &c. would not permit, my time for being at Norwich being fixed; and in particular mentioned, had that not been so urgent, I had a particular aversion ever to think of acting in *Love A-la-Mode* in future at York, as the treatment I had sustained, during the representation of that excellent farce in the last race-week, was such as would deter me from attempting *Sir Archy* on that stage again, and from that performance begged to be excused; but added, if my acting any other part either in play or farce, or both, could possibly contribute to their entertainment and assist the charity, my services, such as they were, the public might freely command. Mr. Tasker of York was with the gentlemen, and he immediately replied, that several leading families were then at York for the winter season who were not there in the race-week; and those persons who were so anxious to have *Love A-la-Mode* had seen it often acted in London; that it could not be denied but a strange misconception had prevailed the night it had been presented in the race-week; but the ladies, one and all, who had been at the last concert night, assured Mr. Wilkinson they should be highly entertained if he would treat them with *Love A-la-Mode*. I

began to relax in my fulkiness, and with a little more persuasion, added to my own good opinion of the piece, and to regain my honour in Sir Archy, complied with their solicitations, but told them I expected applause, not insult, which was readily promised; it was a debt of honour, and was justly paid, as they kept their words even to over-balance with added interest; for the whole farce was a continued roar of approbation and laughter.—O reader! how is this jumble of events to be accounted for? as Hamlet says, “There is something in this more than natural, if Philosophy could find it out.”—And what is more worthy observation, that very farce of Love A-la-Mode, which had four months before grieved my heart in August, should in cold January not only render back compensation with excess of warm joy, but was actually the sole cause of rendering York many years my agreeable place of residence, with a cheerful happy home, as the circumstance evidences, from January 1766 to this day June 4, 1790, his Majesty’s birth-day.—God bless the King, send him a long and prosperous reign—and may I live with health and happiness to repeat my yearly petition.

The narration I have just now given fully proves how strange, perplexed, various, and unforeseen, and how little we can tell what properly ought to

be done for the best, or judge of consequences, in our short uncertain date of human life.

The leading persons were so pleased with their entertainment and my acquiescence, that they called a consultation the day following the charity-play; at which meeting they mentioned, that the York theatre was in a very declining state, even to the disgrace of the city:—dirty scenes, dirty clothes, all dark and dismal.—As to the scenes being so tattered it must be granted as inexcusable, as Mr. Baker was a painter of eminence; his knowledge and taste in drawing will ever speak for him while one of his remaining prints of York or Lincoln minster is to be seen:—But in defence of laziness I must mention his advanced age, with two bad servants attending him as natural enemies—the gout and the rheumatism. The gentlemen urged to Mr. Tasker, that as Mr. Wilkinson was universally acquainted with theatrical matters, and having been in London, here, there, and every where, it would be greatly for the advantage of Mr. Baker, and also for the public, if he would make Mr. Wilkinson such an offer as might render it worth his while, on reflection, to tempt him to fix his residence at York; as Mr. Wilkinson certainly must by that time have satisfied himself with a life of rambling (But in that point they were mistaken.) Mr. Tasker was desired to consider

that proposal, and wait on Mr. Baker with what they partially termed—*the general opinion of the town*. Mr. Tasker lost no time, (as he loved business) but instantly waited on Mr. Baker, and informed him of the particulars of those gentlemen's opinions: Mr. Baker, though really attached to me, yet hesitated on that sudden intelligence, as it seemed to threaten a blow on his own consequence, arbitrary sway, and love of power, which few have philosophy sufficient to adopt and approve: He told Mr. Tasker, that his friend Tate got a great deal of money at various places, and that York theatre could not, by any means, afford to pay Mr. Wilkinson such a sufficient compensation as would induce him to give up his yearly excursions, and be plagued with the never-ceasing troubles that daily attend the attempt of guiding a company of comedians, whose various tempers, vanities, and self expectations, were to the full as difficult to satisfy as the public; and concluded with flatly pronouncing that the matter was impracticable.—Mr. Tasker answered him, that it was not impracticable—it might be easily accomplished;—and without some essential assistance at this juncture to the theatre, he told Mr. Baker he must be ruined; and Providence had thrown Mr. Wilkinson there at that time, perhaps for the preservation of both:—He persisted with hinting

to Mr. Baker, that by having built a new theatre at York from his own pocket, he had run into a debt that would involve him much ; “ and you say,” added Mr. Tasker, “ that you esteem Tate Wilkinson as your son, why then, in God’s name, make him your adopted heir, and act as his father :—you have neither children nor relations, make Wilkinson survivor to all your theatrical property—let your dwelling-house be his home—give his benefits at York, Hull, and Newcastle, clear from all charges—appoint him a competent salary—and as Mr. Wilkinson has accumulated some few hundreds, borrow such sums on bond—allow him interest for his money, and your property being assigned to him will be more than a sufficient security.”——The money (which Baker wanted) had with him the greatest weight in the argument, as it generally has with all the human race. He told Mr. Tasker that he had a sincere regard for the young gentleman ; and after a short silence, and sighing woefully, he said, if Mr. Tasker would make such a proposal to Mr. Wilkinson, he would agree to it, and hoped it would be for the comfort and happiness of both, declaring, had he possessed a fortune, he could not have bequeathed it to any one with more satisfaction than to his adopted Tate ; for he had proved himself a good son, and he had for that worthy point of character

looked on himself as Mr. Wilkinson's parental guardian from the time of his mother's death.—The dialogue thus finished, Mr. Tarker called on me to walk half an hour in the Minster, and soon broached, related, and explained all the particulars just now inserted. The being exalted to the rank of general, that is, being created a manager, struck my bewildered fancy, and I glowed at the idea—it was impossible for me to conceal the eagerness with which I embraced the offer——

And so I dreamt of *riches, honour, pow'r*——

'Twas but a dream tho', and that dream is o'er.

Certainly at that time I walked in my sleep, and it was long before I waked; for my imagination was crowded with an end to my cares, (little supposing they were then only beginning) and my uncontrollable lordly will, and my self-sufficiency, prevented any apprehensions from those rocks where other managers had split, been involved, and shipwrecked; for my wisdom and experience, I to myself pronounced, would guide the vessel safely into haven well laden with honours.

Writings were quickly drawn, signed, and sealed:—I lent Mr. Baker all my money—first one thousand, and at different times after four hundred pounds more: Thus I suddenly became monarch over a set of people that never had been ac-

customed to restraint, but to be their own masters and their manager's directors: They approved not of being under monarchical sway, but were of levelling principles. Many improvements in point of management I framed to be put into immediate execution, such as regarded regulation, alteration, new discipline, with many necessary *et ceteras*, which like battles are easily planned and executed over a cheerful table chit-chat conversation, but a very different and difficult undertaking when to be put into actual execution: Every geographer can advise, direct, and find fault: It is easy to traverse the world by quickly turning round its globe, but it would require more than the geographer's lifetime to explore the extent in reality. As——

One minute gives invention to destroy,

What to rebuild whole ages would employ.

In short every table that allows of players being a subject for conversation, there each Mr. and Mrs. Problem, and Master and Miss Quickfight, can engage, discharge, and settle the whole windings of a theatre, remove all difficulties, and point out each proper arrangement and alteration with the utmost facility.

My first debut, as regent, was in January 1766, *Coriolanus*, for Mr. Robertson's benefit. My gradual attempts at reformation cost me more pains,

and met with much more obstinate opposition from the performers than the public. I shall not enter upon the various adventures that have happened in the long course of almost twenty-five years, yet as I have included my entrance as commander in chief, I must describe one severe edict in force when I assumed the regency reins, though not altogether unnoticed in the foregoing part of this history, as I recollect having hinted at something like it when speaking of the Norwich company—I mean the custom of the man and his wife returning thanks on the stage—and what was truly dreadful, the draggle-tailed Andromache in frost, rain, hail, and snow, delivering her benefit play-bills from door to door, “where piercing winds blew sharp, and the chill rain dropped from some penthouse on her wretched head:” But use had in some measure rendered it familiar—and no wonder if Hector’s widow, when suppliant and in tears, was induced, on such solicitations, to accept with thanks a cheering drop. When I mentioned that degrading and painful custom to the company at York, previous to my being manager, they seemed to lament the woes they sustained as the laborious custom of their workhouse duty (for it really was little less humbling) and to have heard those complaints a stranger would naturally have inquired——

Are all these wretches slaves?

And the reader (particularly if theatrical) will start with astonishment when I aver on my word, that when I put the law in force to entirely and decidedly relieve those ladies and gentlemen from the complained of evident hardship, it was received by the then York company of 1766 with marks of disgust, and a conspired combination against me, their chief, in consequence ensued:—Such is the force of habit, and the use of complying with despicable meannesses, rather than run the hazard of losing a trifle:—So how could I make those free that were by nature slaves? Their pleas were, that the *quality would not come* (a phrase constantly used in country towns by the lower people); that the town inhabitants would be *much enraged*, and that Mr. Wilkinson was not subjected to such supercilious duty; besides it was apparently to the advantage of the theatre; and as the manager shared the receipts on benefit nights, he had no cause to complain or be dissatisfied; he reaped the advantages, and the performers only had the difficulties to encounter. Those arguments I treated as futile, weak, absurd, and not to the purpose.—I gave my answer as a determined one: First, I observed the discredit they appeared in when compared with the performers in London, Dublin, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Bath, and every

other theatre under regular and gentleman-like establishment ; and what weighed in my opinion even more materially was, that I was confirmed in my own judgment that not any performer of the least distinguished reputation, gentleman or lady, would ever professionally visit the York or Hull theatres where such despicable compliance was to be exacted, or, in consequence of not obeying, run the hazard of forfeiting their claim to favour and patronage from the public at large, and be termed impertinent, proud, affected and impudent : Therefore I, against all remonstrances (*or fear of public alehouse abuse, which most managers have the happiness of undergoing*) not only made, enacted, and confirmed as a law, that the manner of returning thanks, and parading the streets with play-bills, should be utterly abolished, and that the modes of the respectable theatres, as far as practicable should be introduced and put into practice.

Good God ! what a sight ! to actually behold Mr. Frodsham, bred as a gentleman, with fine natural talents, and esteemed in York as a Garrick, the Hamlet of the age, running after, or stopping a gentleman on horseback to deliver his benefit bill, and beg half a crown, (then the price of the boxes.) During Mr. Baker's life I never had authority sufficient to prevent the performers from constantly attending the assembly-rooms and pre-

senting their petitions ; but when I was exalted from regent to the being sole monarch, for the credit of York city and myself, I was *then* obeyed ; though in all states there will be now and then refractory black-hearted rebels start up, whose souls are truly malignant and not to be controuled, but in the end such people make themselves so hated and despised, that in consequence of their bad tongues, and their own actions giving the lie to their fawning and dissembled goodness, their services are shunned every where, and they fall into the net they designed for others.

A year before Mr. Baker's death I expended no less than 500l. by obtaining an act of parliament in my own name for two royal patents, for twenty-one years, for York and Hull theatres ; which the parliament and his Majesty honoured me with granting : and about seven years since his Majesty again honoured me with renewed patents ; for which, to my gracious sovereign, and to the high assembled Lords and Commons, I humbly, dutifully, and with the truest gratitude, submissively hope they will honour me by their acceptance of my sincere thanks and acknowledgments. By that grant it is a security for the sums I have expended, besides being dubbed *esquire*, and my troop being relieved from the subterfuge of acting

under a concert of music, and presenting a play *gratis*.

If these Memoirs and Anecdotes obtain the compliment of an hour's perusal, it is as much as I can hope or expect; for an history of this or any kind I am not equal to treat on, were it no more than that of Jack the Giant Killer; and fear the result will prove after all that I am really *a poor poet* in the full sense of the word, and may add, that no boy was ever so weary of his tutor, girl of her bib, nun of doing penance, or old maid of being chaste, as I am with thirty-four years rolling about in a restless theatrical hemisphere. Indeed my broken leg, with constant confinement and indifferent health, has rendered this work partly a matter of amusement:—Praise I am too humble to expect, or think I by any ways deserve; and as to abuse for my attempt in writing, I fear it will be much below criticism, but know the mode of the human mind full well to expect my being below ill-nature, contempt, or scurrility.—If any pen of merit think these sheets worth an attack on my feeble and acknowledged *ignorance*, I will receive the dart as a noble, unexpected, and an honourable extinction of nothing. But I will not, like melancholy Jaques, moral on the time more than to observe, I do not at this juncture perceive any extraordinary light or pleasing prospect to cheer my walk down

hill, for I am truly weary, lame, and tired with service; though each month certainly presents the prospect of this world's lessening to my view, and the vast abyss more plain and ready to ingulph and swallow, where we shall all be enveloped, and imperceptibly view new lights for information, by the permission of a Superior Being.—

Men must abide
Their going hence, ev'n as their coming hither.

The reader, I think, cannot, on a summary of my whole life collected, pronounce it has been solely that of pleasure.—Thanks to my God for my happy state of temper; for I can declare, that in the whole course of my days, in the tedious round of fifty-one years, I have not known nine out of the number to term those of misery or real grief: And though my life has been checquered by innumerable situations, in which I have been whimsically and variously placed, consequently no wonder, if I have often acted right, that I have also oftener acted wrong; and, like an eager child, have not only tasted but devoured the sweets, and now make faces at a few bitters, and wish and want to be secure of health and happiness on bond to the end of my days: for Adversity I do not like to get acquainted with, though at times I fear she will be sending a card of invitation, and compelling

me to dine with her Willy Nilly, and *perchance* without a clean table-cloth—and that is horrid, *unless truly hungry*. But alas!—

Heaven doth with us, as we with torches do,
Not light them for ourselves : for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touch'd
But to fine issues : Nor Nature never lends
The smallest scruple of her excellence,
But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines
Herself the glory of a creditor---
Both thanks and use.

In this jumbled work, as to pursuing a York stage history, it would here be wrong; but I will, at a future opportunity, under the title of the *Wandering Patentee* (as christened by Mr. Woodfall) make a collection of some *particular occurrences* and *personages*, that may divert and direct the southern or northern readers, theatrical or otherwise, to understand, as to incomes, of every theatrical government; also a list of such principal London and other performers as I have had the satisfaction to introduce to, and grace the York stage with, for the credit of myself and that city to the present time; with the merits of the York performers in rotation. I shall also mention particulars relative to the Edinburgh theatre, where I had the honour to be manager for one whole season and two race weeks, and many other theatri-

cal excursions and favours from particular persons. Also the Hull, Leeds, Doncaster, Wakefield, and Pontefract theatres, from the year 1765. I have throughout used freedom of speech, without which, if written under mean apprehensions, many persons and transactions could never have been fairly understood; and on the ground of integrity, with honour, truth, and honesty, I hope and trust I shall ever stand firm, whether as an elevated or a depressed character: When I walk with my memory, I often get a pleasing hour, by reflecting with gratitude, and bowing with adoration to my God for his peculiar goodness, and his snatching me from the brink of the grave, when sunk with poverty and every threatening approach of misery, and then lifting me up with his own almighty arm, and restoring me to instant health, accompanied with worthy and benevolent friends, respect, and affluence, which prevented at the same time the best of mothers from sinking with her grey hairs into the grave with sorrow, and blessing me with the power and the will to give comfort to her latter years and days; and above all am consoled with my parent's confession to God, that her son was the cause of that unexpected and uninterrupted happiness—Here let me stop my career, and sincerely thank my readers, if they have

been enabled by Patience, that sweet handed maid, to travel so far to receive them, and candour and willing memory to recollect the traces of my origin. I will conclude, like Othello, of myself, that to the year 1766 I have faithfully ran it o'er, even from my boyish days *unto* the very date that I here have told it.

The many favours and friendships I have been honoured with for near thirty-four years would make me despicable to myself, did I not glory in thus acknowledging and pledging assurance, that acts of kindness and goodness will never be forgotten by me. If I have not all I wish, pray God make me contented with what I have. I am not too old to learn, neither am I without hopes that madam Fortune will surprize me when in one of here generous frolics:—I will not forget her if she will not forget me. ———

But 'tis the mind should make the body rich.

Indeed 'twould be presumptive

For me to judge of happiness and woe.

Shall ignorance of good and ill

Dare to direct the Eternal Will?

Surely no!—Therefore will conclude with wishing every prosperity to my friends in Great-Britain and Ireland, and particularly to those who are my friends and patrons in my own circuit of

York, Hull, Leeds, Wakefield, Doncaster, and
Pontefract.

I am, with true respect, gratitude, and esteem,
their much honoured, and devoted

humble servant to command,

TATE WILKINSON,

Who is (I fear)

sure to offend, uncertain whom to please.

York, 1790.

THE
MIRROR;
OR,
ACTOR'S TABLET.

WITH A REVIEW OF
THE OLD AND NEW
THEATRICAL SCHOOLS.

—A poor player,
Who frets and struts his life upon the stage,
And then is heard no more.

THE

STORY OF THE

AMERICAN

NAVY

FROM 1776 TO 1898

BY

THE AUTHOR OF

THE HISTORY OF THE

UNITED STATES

NAVY

FROM 1776 TO 1898

BY

THE AUTHOR OF

THE
M I R R O R ;
O R,
A C T O R ' S T A B L E T.

We come like shadows, so depart.

AS in my elbow (though not always my easy) chair, I love to prattle and tell old tales, and remember with advantage what feats were done, I must here entreat the patience and attention of such young persons who fix their present thoughts on stage pageantry, and their views on future greatness, wherein they image to their pleasing warm ideas how far they shall surpass those whom they now look up to and admire; for there are many actors and actresses of the present age, not yet arrived at mediocrity as professors, yet are advanced in years, and far on their journey to the world's end, who boldly affirm, that were the actors of the old school now in being, they would not please if they were to dress their characters as they did forty or sixty years ago. There, cer-

tainly, the present actors' observations would be right, but in point of sterling acting surely in an error.

That there are gentlemen and ladies of infinite merit in most stage departments I rejoice at, as their emolument is a reward to their merits, as well as for the honour and credit of the profession.

As to dress I draw this conclusion, that was Mr. Garrick existing, with the vigour and appearance of thirty, yet, if he was to act Ranger now, he certainly would not dress that agreeable rake as he did forty-three years before this time, but as Mr. Lewis, or any other competent judge does dress that character. And as to the acting, I must persist, (and there are thousands living to back my assertion) that Mr. Garrick would have been a natural performer one hundred years ago: he was the most shining, general player I have yet seen; and were he to act Ranger an hundred years hence he would be a natural Ranger then, and for a very simple rule: (Mr. Macklin was of the old, and is now of the new school, yet I never heard of his deviating from Nature as an instructor or an actor)—for Nature ever will be Nature.—Mr. King's and Mr. Yates's excellencies of the old school prove this.—Shakspeare wrote two

hundred years ago, and could he write in the present æra, he could not make the characters better in boldness or expression of language than those he wrote before.—I do not impertinently, or like an old stager say,—Could Mr. Quin and Mr. Ryan act now, they would give the same satisfaction as they did then.—The reason is evident, though they pleased the audiences of that age, yet the mode and manner not being natural in many characters, the present good discriminating taste that pervades would not relish or suffer it. Mr. Quin's tragedy was strutting, pompous, languid, tiresome, and wanted spirit. But the same idea of one hundred years given just now as a supposition for Mr. Garrick's Ranger, would have an equal claim at present with Mr. Quin's Falstaff; for he was much the best any living person has seen, as he had every requisite from Nature: And though Henderson had great merit, his Falstaff was much inferior, as all he did was the effect of study and art, having neither the person, the voice, nor the eye, in particular, for that part;—in each of these material points Henderson was deficient. Now Quin, with a bottle of claret and a full house, the instant he was on the stage was Sir John Falstaff himself. —

As the well-teaming earth,
 With rivers and show'rs,
 With smiling brings forth
 Her fruits and her flow'rs,
 So Falstaff will never decline ;
 Still fruitful and gay,
 He moistens his clay,
 And his rain and his rivers are wine.
 Of the world he has all but its care ;
 No load, but of flesh, will he bear ;
 He laughs off his pack,
 Takes a cup of old sack,
 And away with all sorrow and care.

Quin's Harry the Eighth, Sir John Brute, all the Falstaffs, Old Bachelor, Volpone, Apemantus, Brutus, Ventidius, Bishop Gardiner, Clause, Gloucester, were all, with several others, all his own ; nor have those characters already mentioned ever truly flourished as when inspired by him. But out of his particular walk he was ever bordering on the ridiculous :—His Richard was very heavy, laborious, and unnatural, and it was *then* thought so ; as I recollect reading a list of plays in a magazine for the year 1750, where, in the catalogue of tragedies and comedies there inserted, was the following line :—

King RICHARD, by Quin. *Much hissed.*

His Othello, Macbeth, Lear, &c. all as bad : He

played Chamont.—What would our modern beaux think of young Chamont, as I have seen Mr. Quin act it at the age of sixty? He was equipped in a long, grully, half-powdered perriwig, hanging low down on each side the breast and down the back, a heavy scarlet coat and waistcoat trimmed with broad gold lace, black velvet breeches, a black silk neckcloth, black stockings, a pair of square-toed shoes, with an old-fashioned pair of stone buckles;—and the youthful, the fiery Chamont adorned himself with a pair of stiff high-top'd white gloves, with a broad old scollop'd laced hat, which when taken off the head, and having pressed the old wig, and viewing his fair round belly with fat capon lined, he looked like Sir John Brute in the drunken scene.

Mr. Garrick brought to the world's light the spirited Chamont; old Ryan was the strong and lusty Polydore, with a red face, and voice truly horrible, which, like Portia, you might quickly have distinguished, “He knows me, as the blind man does the cuckoo, by my bad voice.”

—Ryan also added bad deportment, and was not near so well dressed as Quin's Chamont, though in much the same extraordinary manner; and by them stood Mr. Barry in Castalio, in a neat bag wig, then of the newest fashion, in his bloom and prime of life; and was cer-

tainly one of the handsomest men ever seen on or off the stage, with Mrs. Cibber, all-elegance and neatness by his side as Monimia. The sight of the two ancient heroes of antiquity made such a contrast in the Quartetto, that it struck even my features at the age of eleven with risibility. If so, what a whimsical feeling of tragi-comedy must it have diffused on the muscles of the pit critics, who then decided all disputes, damnations, &c. which at present, to save the audience trouble, the morning papers have taken most of the grand articles of setting up or knocking down into their own custody.

It is incumbent to remember, though Ryan's figure for Phocyas, Frankley, Sir George Airy, &c. would now appear extravagantly ridiculous, yet on the London boards no actor for a course of years could have stood more esteemed and respectable ; and be it observed, that in despite of all these deficiencies of voice, manner, person, dress, years, &c. his Edgar, mad scene of Orestes, fourth-act scene of Macduff, Ford, Dumont in Jane Shore, nay even Lord Townly, (though very likely performed the same week by Mr. Barry, who was in every point most excellent in that character) yet he never repeated the last scene of that part, or the mad scenes of Edgar, without evincing such a strong sense and feeling, accom-

panied with judgment, as removed for the time all sight or sense of his defects and oddities. Mr. Woodward assured me, that when Mr. Garrick went with him to see Ryan's Richard the Third, meaning to be inwardly merry, that Garrick, on the contrary, was astonished at what he saw working in the mind of the ungraceful, slovenly, and ill-dressed figure, which told him more than he before knew, and which caused Garrick's bringing to light that unknown excellence as his own, which in Ryan had remained unnoticed and buried.

There are confessedly more than five to one actors of merit now to what there were in 1747; for their Cloughs, Vaughans, Dagger Mars, Mozeens, Ackmans, Andersons, Pagets, Oats's, Redmans, Wignals, &c. &c. would not now (were they living) be permitted to act at the York or Hull theatres, so nice are they grown, and there is such decent acting in general throughout the kingdom: Yet we must not suppose Mr. Cibber did not understand polite life and good breeding when he wrote the characters of Lord and Lady Townly; they were judged so then, and are so still—and prove that the author knew full as well what a lady of quality should be as the modern writers do. Indeed our fine ladies at present on the stage are tri-

fling when compared with Lady Townly, Lady Betty Modish, Millamant, Maria (now Charlotte in the Hypocrite), and several others. As a proof, those old written characters are what every young female fashionable candidate wishes to play; ask Mrs. Abington and Miss Farren what characters they choose to give the first impression in? they will quickly answer, Charlotte in the Hypocrite, Shakspeare's Beatrice, Lady Betty, &c.—Now if Cibber wrote his ladies characters and his fops well, he at that time knew how to play them; but that was, according to the particular mode of his own, which pleased: But his manner would not please *now* I guess, because that of another age: His Foppington was a coxcomb of that time, and Sir Fopling Flutter, with Sir Courtley Nice:—Now there are no such characters extant, and therefore Lord Foppington is not so pleasing a representative of quality as he was forty years ago: And I not only think, but venture to affirm, against many judgments of stage opinions of a modern green-room, that the celebrated Mrs. Oldfield's Lady Townly, &c would be now pronounced excellent. My imagination leads me to pin faith on this opinion, because my brethren will remark her tragedy did not suit with the bombastic taste of those actors who devoted themselves at the tragic shrine; and the true cause has been, that

she was more natural than her predecessors, and her conversation and manners were universally admired as a lady, which must have been the result of observation, and her being admitted on a familiar and respectable footing with persons of the first distinction, who admired the elegance of the actresses, and saw themselves in her :—And persons of true taste and distinction, however the dress of the times may differ, will ever be easy, affable, attractive, and engaging.—Nay, it can be easily explained to young observers, almost to a certainty; for look back a very few years, and they will find once a year that the *ton* for being seen in public, in the month of January, was naked and bare; and another year the neck and bosom all muffled and barricaded, in July and August: Yet to a Duchess of Devonshire or Rutland, both natives and foreigners bow with admiration, in the same manner, whether the behind is swelled or diminished; as whatever they do, ease and elegance must be attendants: therefore the habiliment to such persons matters very little to a critical observer, whether they are seen decked simply in an Irish poplin, or accoutred in all the gaudy plumes of the most extravagant change of prevailing Paris fashions: And if Mrs. Oldfield's dress for Lady Townly, or Lady Betty, with Mrs. Abington's or any other fine lady's dress, were now put

into a fire, the latter would be consumed to ashes that might help a hot-house, but I fear not produce intrinsic worth—but the Oldfield's would prove

Like purest gold that's tortur'd in the furnace,
Comes out more bright, and brings forth all its weight.

The expence for the necessary profusion of stage-dresses is enormous, but there is nothing real: Taste may be discerned. That this is the period for taste in dress will be readily admitted; but the money expended, and all the true value, rests in the word *taste*. I know this myself perfectly, by having had, about twenty years ago, an old wardrobe I found in the ruins of my theatrical Herculaneum, and which was of great antiquity, and had appertained to Roman emperors, kings, &c. when not a performer, lady or gentleman of the London theatres, but would have involuntarily laughed at the old broad seams of gold and silver lace, and have cast piteous and contemptuous looks on the country performers thus loaded with trumpery: Yet those despicable clothes had, at different periods of time, bedecked real lords and dukes, and were bought at much less price than now; and would produce, by one day's labour of stripping merely the old materials, forty or fifty pounds to provide a supper if the stomach required. And I can assert and prove, that my present ward-

robe is far superior to any out of London, without excepting Dublin or Edinburgh, and has been attended with considerable expence, far beyond the bounds of prudence or common-sense. It is true, as a purchaser of the theatre, the wardrobe is of great cost and value, and would shew a play without fear or disgrace to any audience whatever, as numbers can testify ; but would not, in a state of bankruptcy, pay INTRINSICALLY, as the old despised King Lear's suit almost singly would have done ; as all now consists of foil, spangles, beads, interwoven fast embroidery, silks, satins, &c. which soon wear : An old petticoat, made for a large hoop of the Duchess of Northumberland, thirty years ago, would have served a queen in the theatre several years, then descended to a duchess of Suffolk, afterwards made two handsome tragedy shapes for an old rich Spaniard, and ten years after that burn and produce money to purchase thirty yards of lustring for a modern stage lady. Thirty years ago not a Templar, or decent-dressed young man, but wore a rich gold laced hat, and scarlet waistcoat with a broad gold lace ;—as the miser says, “ he carried an estate upon his back ; ”—also laced frocks for morning dress. I have now worn, occasionally, by comedians (for old characters of wealth) a suit of purple cloth, with gold vellum holes, that I frequent-

ly wore when a young man as a fashionable dress, and spoke the prologue to the Author, gave Tea, &c. on the London stage, and after that used it as my common dress to parade the streets at noon: But I must justly coincide with the point of truth, and declare, the characteristic dressing of plays forty years ago was very inferior indeed to what is seen in these riper years, particularly the comedians. At that time, no more than two or three principal characters, (at Covent Garden in particular) were well dressed, and those not with any variety as now. Mrs. Woffington's wardrobe had only the increase of one tragedy-suit, in the course of the season, in addition to the clothes allotted to her, unless she indulged herself; and she had a new suit for Sir Harry Wildair, in which character Mrs. Woffington looked the man of fashion; and Mrs. Jordan sports now in Sir Harry one of the best legs in the kingdom. Sir Joshua Reynolds is a judge of legs, and has, like Paris with his apple, given his decree on that said leg.

But the gentlemen and ladies in modern-dressed tragedies, forty years ago, at Covent Garden theatre, wore the old laced clothes which had done many years service at Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, besides having graced the original wearers; and the ladies were in large hoops, and the velvet petticoats, heavily embossed, proved extremely incon-

venient and troublesome, and always a page behind to hear the lover's secrets, and keep the train in graceful decorum. If two princesses met on the stage, with the frequent stage-crossing, then practised, it would now seem truly entertaining to behold a page dangling at the tail of each heroine; and I have seen a young lady, not of the most delicate form, who sustained that office frequently—a Miss Mullart;—they are now dismissed, as judged unnecessary and superfluous—but luckily they were pages of honour, and as truly to be depended upon as Edinburgh caddies, as I have never heard of any misdemeanor brought into court by their impeachment:—Yet theatrical kings and queens, like their brethren mortals, sometimes have been frail; but they were family secrets, and ought not to be mentioned again. I have seen Mrs. Woffington dressed in high taste for Mrs. Phillis, for then all ladies' companions or gentlewomens' gentlewomen, actually appeared in that style of dress; nay, even the comical Clive dressed her Chambermaids, Lappet, Lettice, &c. in the same manner, authorised from what custom had warranted when they were in their younger days; and in my remembrance, not a first servant maid, or unfortunate female, that usurped a right of Strand walk, which she termed her own trodden ground, from St. Mary-le-Strand.

to Exeter Change, but what swaggared in her large banging hoop, to the terror of any young novice who dared usurp a footing of those territories :—In short, a large hoop was a requisite and indispensable mode of dress. Strict propriety of habiliment not any manager has yet arrived at, even in London ; and though it is so highly improved these last twenty years, yet the achievement not even money will ever be able to obtain, that is, while the stage is honoured with pretty women, as I sincerely hope it ever will be ;—for common sense, reason, persuasion, nor intreaty, will ever persuade handsome women to appear in a farmer's daughter, or a witch, or a servant maid, but with the head dressed in full fashion, and the feet decked in satin shoes ; yet I think they would be gainers by trying dear variety : For what will attract more than the simple Quaker, or the truly neat chambermaid ? and it is not every man that wishes for a duchess : besides what an advantage to be seen in a gaudy attire one night, and another arrayed in pure simplicity, and be viewed with propriety in a green stuff gown, &c and not as Madge in Love in a Village, or Betsy Blossom, with a French head, white silk stockings, and white satin shoes ; by such contradictions Nature is as distant from the stage now as she was an hundred years ago ; and stuff

shoes and clean cotton stockings would look not only as well, but better, by the preservation of character:—Nay, the plain woman (if such there be) would not be behind hand, as she would, I fear, keep equal pace in absurdity, and relinquish all pretensions to propriety, by being as fantastical as the most beautiful young one. And these contradictions of dress and manner of behaviour are often beheld off the stage by chance observers, and are very properly introduced and ridiculed on, and receive the rod of correction from the comic Muse, as proper objects for the poet's satire and the public mirth. Not any plays throughout were ever dressed as they are now—there the public enjoy a splendor indeed superior to their forefathers. Also in the magnificence of theatres, the scenery and lighting are now beyond compare; but it is evident our grannies had an idea of what they did not possess, as may be proved by the orders for scenery in Sir William Davenant's plays, Dryden's *Tempest*, *King Arthur*, Lee's *Constantine*, *Cyrus the Great*, &c. &c. Except in Mr. Rich's pantomimes, the public then had seldom any scenery that proved of advantage, so as to allure the eye:—But now frequently we have new scenery to almost every piece. It was very uncommon formerly for new plays to

have more than what we term stock scenery:— There is one scene at Covent Garden used from 1747 to this day in the Fop's Fortune, &c. which has wings and flat, of Spanish figures at full length, and two folding doors in the middle:—I never see those wings slide on but I feel as if seeing my very old acquaintance unexpectedly. The advantage of the now established theatres is another useful alteration for these times; tho' the Opera House, when first finished, must have been noble, as we are told by Colley Cibber it was so large they could not be heard till the cieling was lowered and the house lessened. The Little Theatre in the Hay Market, as it was called twenty-six years ago, till it was beautified and put into its present form by Mr. Foote and Mr. Colman, would *now* cut a very *contemptible figure* in most towns of England, and not fit to enter, after seeing Bath, Edinburgh, Bristol, Liverpool, York, and many other theatres. By this progress and embellishment of regular, handsome, well-ornamented theatres, with good scenery, wardrobe, and band, (at York in particular the latter) we may be assured that these theatres are superior to those wherein Booth, Betterton, and Cibber acted; for though Drury Lane was larger than the most of our present country theatres, yet forty years ago the audience part

of those London theatres were very crazy, inconvenient, and not pleasing to the eye: and at present the stair-case to the *upper boxes* at Drury Lane is so narrow, that should an alarm of fire happen, the persons in the two upper tier of boxes would be thrown into such confusion, should they open at the same time the different doors, the passage is so strait and they would so effectually block up each other, that not one single soul could escape, and their increasing fears would cause the situation to be alarming and dreadful to a degree. Indeed Covent Garden is not so complete in that department (at least it was not so when I saw that theatre before the late alterations). The upper boxes at Edinburgh are far preferable to those at London for seeing, and indeed, in that respect, are better than any theatre I know; and it has an advantage (like Smock-Alley) by the audience part being formed in a well-finished circle. Drury Lane, like London-Bridge, has been much frittered and patched at very great expence; and, after all, the only way to repair will be to pull it down, and erect a new one: —which I understand is to be done, and I wish for health to see it finished. In proper-built convenient theatres, I am told, Paris has within these few years taken the lead, though some time ago it was greatly inferior: If they are like the plates

which I have of those theatres, they appear very noble and spacious, and not surrounded by buildings, but good open road for carriages round:—However, as a print is not always to be depended on, I cannot say more in praise of those structures, but, by what I guess, and what I have heard concerning those in Paris; and from the pictures sent to me from thence by Mr. Maude of York, who judged I should like a peep at those theatres, being at such a distance—*Veu de Theatre Italien—Veude TheatreFrancois—L’Opéra Prochela Porte Saint Martin.*—The Opera House is far superior, particularly the stage, as two hundred soldiers, I am informed, at times appear thereon in tragic pieces when it is necessary. These alterations of theatres in the country I am not clear, on mature deliberation, have been done for the better—so much additional finery and splendor was not requisite, as tolerable decent drapery may do very well for a house near Temple-Bar, that would look despicable in Grosvenor-Square:—Besides, while those inconveniences remained, the first actors and actresses would not have deigned to visit the provincial playhouses; for even when the theatres were closed sixty years ago, no principal performer ever played, as now, at Liverpool, Birmingham, &c. as we may conclude from Mrs. Centlivre’s Prologue to her *Busy Body*—

This season must things bear a smiling face,
But play'rs in summer have a dismal case,
Since your appearance only is our act of grace.

Thirty years ago Mr. Barry or Mrs. Cibber would not have disgraced (as they at that time judged) their current London stamp for being paid in July in Birmingham coin on any account: Indeed such would have been thought by their London patrons a most disagreeable and disgraceful exploit: And the Londoners will be astonished to be truly informed, that *now* Mrs. Siddons, Mrs. Jordan, and others, make their true golden harvest on their summer excursions out of the metropolis. Bath, from its great fashionable resort and consequence, has of course an improving theatre; and though only one hundred miles distant from London, causes in the Londoners many a wishful look to honour Bath with five or six nights in the course of a season, and thereby secure a couple of hundred pounds: But those Bath managers act more prudently, as they never permit London, or any other actors, however the voice of fame may have exalted them, to perform a few nights only:—Mrs. Crawford, for instance, lived there all the last winter, but she was not offered any terms of engagement, only such as the theatre would afford as expenditure for the whole season; but no acting there for a short period to

take the cream and leave the skimmed milk for the managers and performers to exist on. Consequently Bath not being capable to pay enormous salaries, the receipts being by no means adequate or proportionable, as London must secure the principal performers for the winter; and in case of disagreement, Dublin and Edinburgh are equal to reward their labours, by holding out a lucrative and happy asylum. Great theatrical personages, who formerly used to look upon a city or town as a *bore*, now, on the contrary, in the summer grant they are commodious, respectable, and even alluring; and with great good manners, compliance, and condescension, will consent to trifle away a few nights at such insignificant places: Even the Jordan herself, who at present reigns as our modern Thalia, has deigned to visit Cheltenham, Reading, Margate, Richmond, and Harrogate, which places yielded great profits, silver medals and subscriptions falling at her feet in plentiful showers, and she (as greatness knows itself) acts naturally on such occasions:—Being *earnest in her demands*, I wish her every prosperity, and hope she will accumulate——

London performers, when in the country, have only the trouble to repeat their tasks like young scholars sent for a fix weeks vacation, who for the credit and pride of their papas and masters are ex-

pected to return perfect, and repeat when sent back to school. The consequence of these visitors, though it gratifies the pride of the audiences, (not forgetting also the manager's own *ostentation*, in the principal theatres remote from the great city) is not always productive, though it gives a glare to enterprise; therefore every manager out of London should watch his farm with as much fear and observance as a West Indian planter does a hurricane, which destroys his fine prospect, and he bestows three quarters of the year in hopes the fourth quarter's produce may make amends for devastation:—So the manager, with the little overplus gained, should never lay out what is so dearly bought in too lavish improvements in a theatre; for the absence of the reigning London favourite leaves a cold chill and ominous ill-fated blast on all theatrical culture for the year to come. Indeed there are always people and money, where fashion and inclination prompt them to attend a playhouse, which, when not so, the theatre only obtains contempt, false pity, and less attendance. It is true, by these advantages which I have taken the liberty to mention, plays are wonderfully altered for the better: but was I asked, “If in consequence of such good fare, are not the audiences altered for the better also?” I should be compelled to answer, “Indeed they are not,

but far the contrary.” Frequently seeing the best acting, has destroyed all theatrical *regular* relish. I was lead formerly to believe, when I first began the mode of procuring principal performers from London, it would have given information to the people in general, and made more and more converts to my conventicles; but there I was egregiously mistaken, for people who are not blessed with affluent fortunes in the middling class of life, with proud minds and little souls, have but as much for pleasures as they can prudently spare; therefore if they expend in one week what would serve for a month for themselves and their families’ purposes, there is likely to be a drawback—besides its being *unfashionable*, and then all is over with a theatre:—For many go to a play (as the fine lady says) sometimes, because—Because why? Because all the world is there;—not to see the play, but to be seen. And it is surprising my own appetite did not inform me this; for if I feed one week on pine-apples, grapes, nectarines, and peaches, I would rather go without fruit the week following than eat common pears, plums, or blackberries. Indeed patents have not only been a security for theatrical property, but have put the country actors on a more decent level, which was highly necessary; for though there are exceptions from all well-bred persons, yet an actor in London is

very differently respected to what he is in the country. It is so in common life;—we are connected with, or behaved to by, a dependent or independent acquaintance as interest, caprice, or the humour hits. A Cockney, merely confined to London, and who thinks it a journey from Wapping to Covent Garden to see the play, is certainly of all critics one of the worst; for he was born in London and lives in London, and any brother mechanic from a distant county is looked on as ignorant, and told how to *comport* himself. On retrospect I recollect an instance of this kind in myself; for, till the age of seventeen, I judged every man and woman I saw ignorant and stupid who lived two miles beyond Richmond and Hampton Court: A stronger instance I remember of Mr. Townsend, whose respectable family I have so frequently before mentioned; he honoured me with being my cashier, and when I mentioned wanting it as the York manager, he said, “What a fool must you be, Tate, to trust your money with Yorkshire people, for they think of nothing but to over-reach us here in the south?” Another idea of vulgar Cockney wisdom I was shewn a few years ago, when I was relating in London an history of York with every respect, and indeed blazoning our northern fêtes, races, &c. and concluding my flourish with the ladies going to the assembly—

rooms in chairs, my good sister Cockney, with all the elegance of one hump before and another behind, fell into an involuntary fit of laughter, for which I could not apprehend the reason; but the instant her pleasant convulsions gave permission, she rung the bell most furiously, and called aloud, "Mr. Jennings! Mr. Jennings! come down stairs—come down stairs—here's Mr. Wilkinfon tells me they have chairs at York!—Oh! I should delight to see those horse godmothers, those *wulgar* ladies, get into chairs!"—I need not observe to my reader that the lady was not of exalted breed—but is it not strange that any person of common comprehension should let the too evident and common partiality as a Londoner prevent them from naturally knowing, by yearly observation, that London would not be that extensive and rich capital it is, unless supported by the resort of ladies and gentlemen from every county in the kingdom; and their own reflections in August, September, and October, should make them naturally note why, in those months in particular, they exclaim, "O what an empty town!—nobody to be seen!—all the world is in the country!" &c.—On this subject I must beg leave to intrude another instance:—Some fourteen years ago I dined at the *London Tavern* with a truly good friend of mine, Mr. Robert Bell of Hull,

and a large party of his intimates, resident in the metropolis:—(It is certainly superfluous to mention that the town of Hull, in the kingdom of Great Britain, stands forward as a seaport-town for exports and imports, and is certainly superior to any after Liverpool and Bristol:)—The dinner was good, and Mr. Bell's guests were cheerful and agreeable.—I was not known in my public capacity, but only as a Mr. Wilkinson, the acquaintance of Mr. Bell; and my dialect conforming to my brother Cockneys, I was not supposed but as a kinsman, therefore a man of knowledge, being a Londoner. Plays at length became a topic of conversation, when Mr. Bell began to pay some compliments on the good representations of which they could boast at Hull, under the direction of a person whom he regarded, and for whose prosperity he was anxious, when one gentleman in particular burst into a loud laugh, (which was seconded by others) and when sufficiently recovered, begged of Mr. Bell to inform him whether they had blankets or a green cloth, as a substitute for scenery—for he never had been at a play in the country, but should like to see one of all things, it must be such a *bore*. Mr. Bell very gravely replied—If the gentleman judged it worth his attention he might receive immediate information of every particular, as the gentleman at

his right hand, Mr. Wilkinſon, was the director and patentee of the Hull theatre. This immediately turned the laugh, and my brother Cockney begged a thouſand pardons:—It ſerved as a very good joke, and often has been related by Mr. Bell as a proof how little intelligent ſome inconfiderate Londoners are.

Ti-tum-ti is another notion that even London managers and critiques have of plays in the country, but that is all exploded; extravagance of manner and deviation from the truth too evidently prevailing. That many great geniusses are bred in the country, that a London theatre, with its rod of authority and good judgment, would rectify and improve, is indisputable:—But I am not writing or hinting of a London audience when I ſpeak of ſuch confirmed Cockneys within the ſound of Bow bell; there is here and there ſcattered out of London a ſtrange ſet of *gnats*, or would-be-meddling officious critiques, who are merely a *but* for the players when they turn their backs, and are the plague of their own acquaintances with their profound knowledge and experience of the drama, and deal out the words *minutiæ* and *propriety*, which they have gleaned ſuperficially from theatrical phraſes, all pronounced with much ſelf-approbation from ſuch Sir Oracles; they are much attached to reviving obſolete plays,

and casting and instructing the actors:—I knew such a one for years, and whenever I find such condescension with advancing steps approaching, who if once he honours you with his advice (which he means *commands*) and acquaintance, which lasts only whilst you implicitly bow and comply with his refined notions—but I avoid such a gracious person as I would a pest, being well confirmed, from experience, if he once gets hold of my ear or time I shall be to a certainty deprived of both.

One disadvantage more to the managers of country theatres arises from the roads being so excellent to what they were formerly, and the various conveniences for those in middling life as well as the affluent, the increase of fashionable dissipation, &c. are all combined causes for the ruin of country theatres.

Nothing is more common than to meet an acquaintance in the York theatre on the Saturday, who, if asked how he liked the play, will answer, “Why tolerable:—but having seen it last Wednesday night so *delightfully* acted at Drury Lane, it made the comedy appear very tiresome.”

Mr. Woodfall said Mrs. Siddons spoke sensibly when she first acted Portia, but that her powers were unfit for a London stage, and were only calculated for such small places as she in the country

had been accustomed to.—Mr. Woodfall was not right as it proved; and Mr. Woodfall, I sincerely and honourably declare, I esteem as a man of sound judgment.

Indeed the frequent intercourse between London and York, occasioned by the facility of the roads, is a fatality, in fact, instead of an advantage; for though the mind may be theatrical, it leans naturally to conceit, vanity, and self-love; and it is no wonder that the London play should throw the Yorkshire one at a distance: for tho' with every respect and high opinion I feel and acknowledge their indubitable right to preference and superiority, yet I will venture to affirm, that even Mr. Garrick (such is the force of prejudice) would not have pleased the superfine critic of York, or of any other place so well had he been only a provincial actor.—This assertion is bold, but easily evinced:—Mrs. Siddons was thought a good actress at York when in her prime, of life, but not so great an actress, nor followed as the rage of the times when she was dismissed the theatre as incapable of her engagement, till the Londoners recanted their former ill-judged decisions; and as a contrary effect, when most deservedly sanctioned, they fainted, screamed, and expired whenever that lady acted, a few years afterwards: And for the honour of country judge-

ment, be it remembered, that had they in that instance followed London example, (often the case) why that said London had lost the pleasure of seeing (take her all in all) the first actresses within memory.

Actors are led into an error in point of dressing livery servants of country gentlemen so awkwardly:—True, such beings were in character eighty years ago; in some bye villages some traces are still to be seen; but in every country gentleman's family the servants at present are as forward fine gentlemen's gentlemen as the metropolis can boast of, and most of them have London educations, and are full as coxcombical as any Sir Harry, Lord Duke, or Tom, which the London stage produces—nor are they deficient in the grand tour, as very many visit Paris yearly—and Bath and Paris grow rich on Yorkshire spoils. It is astonishing the number of families, from York only, now at Paris and Bath; and were they not absentees, but were, according to my wishes, kept in their own county, it would make a joyful alteration in my finances, and would not injure their own; but happily for them they have such plenty of golden ore that they can breathe what air, and in what climate they please, and have a constant supply like Fortunatus's purse. If I had youth and spirit, and boldly trod the road, neck or nothing, and wished

to make depredations on Yorkshire purses, I would never hazard life by attacking persons so-lacing in carriages, who were departing *from London*, particularly those of flashy gentlemen and ladies ; for carry what cash they will into London, if they have sufficient to bring them back without borrowing on the bond, and without being in debt, they have visited London cheaply.—I mention this from my own experience, but not as a good example, and we are too apt to judge of others by ourselves : but I dare say most will agree, that they never think of going to London without a tolerably supply of metal ; and if they do reflect at all, do not expect to return with many guineas to spare.

Plays are hackneyed now in every town and village:—The theatre is not such an object for the bumpkin gazers as formerly, and it is the million that must make the playhouse answer. Fine theatres out of London are like an easy countenance with an aching heart.—Theatres in general should be under the controul of an actor of judgment, experience, good-nature, &c. ; and tho' we have instances of gentlemen of property being managers, they in general have found money does not flow like a spring well (though it is in truth a *sinking* one). The profession in life of ease and pleasure,

as it appears to be, to an unthinking auditor, who will say, "Well may these players be happy people, they get money for nought but making game and picking folks' pockets."—But gentlemen managers very rarely succeed, though the ideal riches have tempted many to rust real ore under the rubbish and dust of wardrobes, scene-rooms, painting-rooms, &c. I know not one instance at present where any manager and actor makes a fortune:—Garrick did, but Colley Cibber merely retired with a competency—Wilkes and Booth no more—Betterton died very poor; a man it is said every body loved, in and out of the theatre; and known by courtier and peasant by the appellation of *honest Tom*—that was honour indeed as an actor and manager—it is so written down in stage history, and I cannot contradict it:—It is true he had the appellation from all who knew him of *honest Tom*, but neither his genius, his labour, his excellence, fame, goodness, nor even his honesty had procured him gentleman-like existence, as he had a charity-benefit at the age of seventy-five, when he was supported on one side by Mrs. Barry, a famous actress at that time, and the celebrated Mrs. Bracegirdle on the other, who had quitted the theatre for many years in her bloom of youth with unsullied reputation, and was the admira-

tion of all who beheld her, on or off the stage.—Mrs. Bracegirdle, I believe, has not been dead above twenty-five years—her age must have been remarkable.—She was well born, and brought on the stage by Mr. Betterton; was, I believe, the original Statira, and in most of Rowe's tragedies: Mrs. Pritchard shewed me her part of Clarissa in the Confederacy, which was written out by Mrs. Bracegirdle's own hand; they were acquainted, and Mrs. Pritchard told me, that venerable actress came there on purpose to see her act Mrs. Oakley in the Jealous Wife during its first run.

The advantages I have mentioned the London theatres flourish with at present are not all confined to what I have asserted as to the theatres, dresses, scenery, and many accommodations; but there is no alteration better, than the stage in these days not being infested with persons behind the scenes in common, but particularly on benefit nights.—As a proof of the force of absurdity I have often wondered, and so have others, why new stage boxes (placed where the useful stage doors used to be) were frequented; but, in short, there are persons always who would prefer such a box, were it much higher on the stage, so few want really to see the piece attentively:—Witness ladies of fashion in London, thirty years ago, sitting at the very backs of the performers.—

When I had the honour at York to wait upon his Royal Highness the late Duke of York, he said, "Wilkinson! where am I to sit?"—I replied, "In the stage box." At which he smiled, and said, "So because I am the Duke of York I must sit in the worst box in the theatre for seeing the play!"

The theatres formerly were not large enough on such occasions, as frequently, on the benefit of a Woodward, a Mrs. Cibber, a Shuter, and others, was the case; therefore the following advertisement appeared at the bottom of each play-bill on any benefit of consequence:—"Part of the pit will be railed into the boxes; and for the better accommodation of the ladies, the stage will be formed into an amphitheatre, where servants will be allowed to keep places." When a great house was not sufficiently ascertained (as the performer judged) for the places taken and the tickets sold, at the bottom of the bill was, "*N. B.* Not any building on the stage." What was termed *building* on the stage, certainly was the greatest nuisance that ever prevailed over an entertainment for the elegant and general resort of any metropolis: Yet London has not stood singular, as its rival city, and seat of elegance and fashion, Paris, had formerly the same defects (if we who have not been there may guess) a few years

ago—if credit is to be given to the authority of Mr. Foote's Englishman in Paris, "We saw crowds of people going into a house, and comedy pasted over the door: in we trooped with the rest, paid our cash and sat down on the stage. Presently they had a dance, and one of the young women, with long hair trailing behind her, stood with her back to a rail just by me.—Ecod! what does me, for nothing in the world but a joke, as I hope for mercy, but ties her locks to the rail; so, when it was her turn to figure out, fouse she flapped on her back!—'Twas devilish comical!"

Custom reconciles many things in every stage of life; and though it was the most irksome to a performer that ever could be inflicted as a punishment, the slavery of course was made easy to the persons whose benefit it was that occasioned the confusion, the perquisite being always prevailing: and if Mr. Shuter was proud that the superflux was a compliment to his wonderful abilities, Conscience would gain acquiescence to undertake the labouring oar for a brother or sister performer, as mutual labourers in the vineyard.

But, my kind reader, suppose an audience behind the curtain up to the clouds, with persons of a menial cast on the ground, beaux and no beaux crowding the only entrance, what a play it must have been whenever Romeo was breaking open

the supposed tomb, which was no more than a screen on those nights set up, and Mrs. Cibber prostrating herself on an old couch, covered with black cloth, as the tomb of the Capulets, with at least (on a great benefit night) two hundred persons behind her, which formed the back ground, as an unfrequented hallowed place of *chapefs* skulls, which was to convey the idea of where the heads of all her buried ancestors were packed.

I do not think at present any allowance but peals of laughter could attend such a truly ridiculous spectacle:—Yet strange as it would now seem and insufferable, yet certain it is that I have seen occasionally many plays acted with great applause to such mummary, as to general appearance and conception: A strange proof, and the strongest I think that can be given, how far a mind may be led by attention, custom, and a willingness to be pleased without the least aid of probability; its chief and sole object certainly tended only to create laughter and disgust. Nay, the stage, which was not thirty years ago near so wide as at present, also the stage-doors, (which must be well remembered) and the stage-boxes, before which there were false canvas, inclosed fronts on each side of two or three seats, on to the lamps, for ladies of distinction, which rendered it next to impossible for those ladies in the stage-boxes to see at all; but still it was the fashion,

and therefore of course charming and delightful.— and whenever a Don Cholerick in the Fop's Fortune, or Sir Amorous Varnish, in Woman's a Riddle, or Charles in the Busy Body, tried to find out secrets or plot an escape from a balcony, they always bowed and thrust themselves into the boxes over the stage-door amidst the company, who were greatly disturbed, and obliged to give up their seats.

The actor talked of being alone amongst hundreds; and Sir Amorous hung in a sling, with Mrs. Betty adding to the inconvenience. These were faults indeed, and almost beyond belief, within these forty years, even with all the knowledge of the Bettertons, Cibbers, Booths, and Wilks to have cleared the way, and not have left such passages of the Drama to be corrected; which their own honour and common sense might so easily have removed and expunged from their journals of disgrace: as they must now remain a lasting stigma on their taste and judgment.

To add instances of equal absurdity in the country would be superfluous, and afford no wonder at all.—The body of course was ill, when the great mind was overpowered with sickness, debility, and disorder.—Mr. Garrick was a doctor, but too late to cure this evil at his setting forth;—better however late than never: but he *only*

remedied the disease for the advantage of the train of actors that followed him, more than for any long enjoyment that it afforded to his own pride and satisfaction as the projector, or as the entire expunger and exterminator of those horrid intrusions on the mind of sensibility: Besides these troubles and inconveniences, not even those of the first theatrical rank could be insured or protected from insult; yet to this real drudgery, mortification, degradation, and humiliation, I have often seen Mr. Garrick and Mrs. Cibber exposed. I can well remember, when I was thirteen years of age, viewing Mr. Quin, on Monday, March 19, 1753, for the benefit of Mr. Ryan, play the character of Falstaff. He was thus announced in the play-bill:

“The part of Falstaff WILL be performed by
“Mr. QUIN”——

Which was his last night of performing.——

The Stage was at 5s. — Pit and Boxes all joined together at 5s. There was only one entrance on each side the stage, which was always particularly crowded. First, they sported their own figures to gratify self consequence, and impede and interfere with the performers who had to come on and go off the stage. Affronting the audience was another darling delight—particularly, offending the galleries, and thereby incurring the dis-

pleasure of the gods, who shewed their resentment by dispersing golden showers of oranges and half-eaten pippins, to the infinite terror of the ladies of fashion seated in the pit on such public nights, where they were so closely wedged as to preclude all possibility of securing a retreat, or obtaining relief till the *finale*, when they all moved from their situation by general consent.

The stage spectators were not content with piling on raised seats, till their heads reached the theatrical cloudings; which seats were closed in with dirty worn out scenery, to inclose the painted round from the first wing, the main *entrance* being up steps from the middle of the *back scene*, but when that amphitheatre was filled, there would be a group of ill-dressed lads and persons sitting on the stage in front, three or four rows deep, other wise those who sat behind could not have seen, and a riot would have ensued: So in fact a performer on a popular night could not step his foot with safety, least he either should thereby hurt or offend, or be thrown down amongst scores of idle tipsey apprentices.

The first time Holland acted Hamlet it was for his own benefit, when the stage was in the situation here described. On seeing the Ghost he was much frightened, and felt the sensation and terror usual on that thrilling occasion, and his hat flew

a-la-mode off his head. An inoffensive woman in a red cloak, (a friend of Holland's) hearing Hamlet complain the air bit shrewdly, and was very cold, with infinite composure crossed the stage, took up the hat, and with the greatest care placed it fast on Hamlet's head, who on the occasion was as much alarmed in *reality* as he had just then been feigning. But the audience burst out into such incessant peals of laughter, that the Ghost moved off without any ceremony, and Hamlet, scorning to be outdone in courtesy, immediately followed with roars of applause: The poor woman stood astonished, which increased the roar, &c. It was some time before the laughter subsided; and they could not resist a repetition (that merry tragedy night) on the re-appearance of the Ghost and Hamlet.

Mr. Quin, aged sixty-five, with the heavy dress of Falstaff, (notwithstanding the impatience of the audience to see their old acquaintance) was several minutes before he could pass through the numbers that wedged and hemmed him in, he was so cruelly encompassed around.—What must the reader suppose at so barbarous and general a custom being not only yielded to, but approved by the performers—Mrs. Cibber arrayed for Juliet in a full white satin dress, with the then indispensable large hoop, in all her pomp of woe, thus shaken

and taken prisoner as it were by foes sarcastic and barbarous ! And in these situations they underwent greater afflictions of punishment and tyranny than ever the Mrs. Pritchard or Woffington experienced, as an Arpasia or a Merope, from a Bajazet or a Polipliontes.

Now Mr. Garrick acutely felt this horrid inconvenience ; for though the actor might reconcile these offensive and degrading situations for an additional hundred pounds profit, yet as Mr. Garrick on such occasions had not a fellow-feeling, it was therefore to *him* more irksome. The public truly knew and felt the inconvenience, but this was cheerfully submitted to. They, then, considered it as a reward to the favourite actor for his yearly labour, toil and industry ; but it may easily be supposed that many lovers of the Drama deprived themselves from seeing a play so disgracefully acted, on such occasions, however well such persons might wish the performers : But at the same time they consulted their own ease and comfort by absenting themselves on such nights. Yet such is the force of true good sterling acting, that I do aver, I have seen on very particular occasions, when the stage has not been *too much* crowded, a play performed with universal approbation.

Mr. Foote's first night of the Englishman in Paris for Mr. Macklin's benefit, stood the hazard

of the die under the disadvantage of this predicament. Its value was stamped that night, and a great run and establishment it met with the winter following: Mr. Garrick's Lord Chalkstone the same. A proof what good acting, humoured with attention and candour will produce; and the actors when not interrupted on such benefit nights, but in lieu surrounded by a well-bred set of ladies and gentlemen, have felt themselves so much at ease by such specimens of good-luck, (for it could be owing to nothing else) that they have gloried in the unexpected luxury of comfort and encouragement with which they have been so fortunately received; and they have acted as well as if surrounded by their usual slaves and attendants, with the addition of scenery, &c. to have aided their exertions.

At the time this bear-garden flourished in our theatres, whenever on the managers' nights the boxes overflowed in the winter season; not only their acquaintance, but persons of distinction and fashion were indiscriminately admitted behind the scenes, particularly at Drury-Lane on the nights Mr. Garrick acted his first esteemed characters of Richard, Lear, Bayes, &c. but I have often seen him distressed on such nights. At Covent-Garden the same rude custom was prevalent, but not unless on very rare occasions were they so much dis-

turbed with such visitors. The boxes at that theatre did not so often groan with the overpowering numbers, unless when one of Rich's raree-shows was revived ; as Harlequin Sorcerer in particular, when the following paragraph was inserted at the bottom of the bill.

“ As any obstructions in the movements of the
“ machinery will greatly prejudice the perform-
“ ance of the entertainment, it is hoped that no
“ gentlemen will take it amiss the being refused
“ admittance behind the scenes.”

“ Ladies are requested to send their servants by
“ three o'clock.”

And if the performers at either house, on a benefit, were moderate in their exactions or hopes from the town, they cheered their well-wishers with placing the following line conspicuous.

“ N. B. There will not be any building on
“ the stage.”

When Rich, after two or three years' promise and delay, brought forth one of these long-wished-for pantomimes, it was a rage, a madness incredible seized all the Londoners : On such fortunate occurrences Mr. Rich was strongly attached and tenderly tenacious of his harlequin jacket being prophaned or infringed upon ; and kept his holy rites and mysteries of serpents, lions, druids, &c. sacred from the inspection of all curious

prying inspectors. Nor would he have had his magical sword interrupted, or his fountains and cascades stopped in their munificent flow to the admiring and astonished crowds in front, to have pleased all the nobility in the kingdom. And indeed the difference of performing pantomimes under Mr. Rich's direction and skill was as much superior at that time, as was Mr. Garrick's Hamlet at Drury-Lane compared to old Ryan's at Covent-Garden.

The constant admission behind the scenes is nowhere more fully or better explained than by Mr. Garrick in the farce of *Lethe*, acted first at Goodman's Fields; where he makes the Fine Gentleman thus express himself——

“*Æsop*. How do you spend your evening Sir?”

“*Fine Gent*. I dress in the evening, and go
“generally behind the scenes of both play-houses;
“not, you may imagine, to be diverted with the
“play; but to intrigue and shew myself. I
“stand upon the stage, talk loud, and stare about,
“which confounds the actors, and disturbs the
“audience; upon which the galleries, who hate
“the appearance of one of us, begin to hiss, and
“cry, Off, off! while I, undaunted, stamp my foot
“so—loll with my shoulder thus—take snuff with
“my right hand and smile scornfully—thus.—
“This exasperates the savages, and they attack us

“ with vollies of sucked oranges, and half-eaten
“ pippens.”

“ *Æsop.* And you retire?”

“ *Fine Gent.* Without doubt, if I am fo-
“ ber ; for orange will stain silk, and an apple
“ disfigure a feature.”

This is a proof that Garrick saw and felt the evil in his younger days ; and he at last mustered courage by one bold stroke to put the hatchet to the tree, and thereby annihilate the grievance ; and tho’ he had undergone these hardships and inconveniences for many years, with the utmost severity and patience, yet he judged it a reformation due to his future name and fame. And I may observe it is not always seen that much-wished-for alterations, even in affairs of the utmost moment, are in general approved or willingly submitted to by the million ; with whom no reason or argument will or can convince, or wear off ancient customs and prejudices.

As Mr. Garrick had three parties to encounter, and each formidable, when bundled they were truly alarming. First, to banish the young beaux from behind the scenes was judged a daring attempt ; (though Mr. Sheridan had proved it was to be done in Dublin, where the behaviour sometimes had been mentioned as *most savage* ;) as the manager’s right to rule, where young men of ton

were concerned, was looked upon as a vulgar law, which none but the mean spirited obeyed. The lower order were attached to it; as going behind the scenes on benefit nights pleased young clerks and others, who liked to see the actresses nearer than they were accustomed to; also most of the principal, and several of the middling class of the performers would not choose to pay Mr. Garrick's charges for their benefit nights, and be abridged of a 100l or a 150l. advantage, accruing from the building and general admittance on the stage.

Garrick did not like the obstacles he had to encounter, till a lucky thought burst in upon his reverie concerning that business. He reflected that the theatre was but in an indifferent state; and that by enlarging it to the now present form, 1790, it would not only immediately answer for his pecuniary advantages, but also for a public theatrical property, which he meant in four or five years after that to part with to the best bidder, as was the case when Doctor Ford, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Linley, were the purchasers, as he grew harassed, and had secured affluence in an overabundance. Which makes it lamentable to consider how short a time he enjoyed a private life: for he was snatched from his friends and all his worldly wealth, in about two years after his stage farewell.

However his projected plan he put in practice ; altered the Old Drury-Lane into its present form, which now holds considerably above 1000. in front more than it did thirty years ago : and, after this beneficial alteration was accomplished, by degrees all parties were pleased and convinced of its propriety. The comedians had particular reasons to jump for joy, as they received the same benefit emoluments, without those degrading and irksome situations, which interest had made them submit to. The Covent-Garden managers adopted the same change of measures, and from that time general admittance and stage building, on benefits, has ever been prohibited.

These stage remarks have carried my memory back to recollect that the same evils existed in provincial theatres, and in a worse degree ; as those stages (not being formed into an amphitheatre) were without any order or decency, merely rows of forms, one level with the other : for the audience part of those theatres were full large for their usual seasons of acting ; yet on particular benefits, London furnished a plea for what might be attempted to render the bad playhouses worse than they were before. And the alterations in this respect, from Mr. Garrick's reformation of abuses in London, I should ap-

prehend led into the sudden wonderful improvements, enlargements, and aggrandizing of most of our theatres in every principal town and city.

And as to the article of being freed from beaux behind the scenes, a greater blessing could not be wished or more devoutly prayed for; as it cannot be conceived how dreadful in the country that would sometimes prove, (my own situation in my history mentioned at Shrewsbury, is one instance) the hauteur and dignity of such visitants being often so insulting and imperious as not to be described.

The receipts of the theatres, it is true, should be mentioned. In 1750, two hundred pounds before the curtain, at Covent-Garden, was judged an amazing sum. Now, we hear of upwards of four hundred pounds; but the profits of the season I dare pronounce are not equal to Mr. Garrick's reign, the expences are grown so enormous.

At Dublin, in 1757, one hundred and fifty pounds was a great house indeed. In 1763, one hundred and eighty pounds at Crow-Street was judged a wonder: but with the late alterations, Mr. Daly had, in July 1790, three hundred and twenty-four pounds; and he mentions hundreds that could not obtain admittance.

Mr. Garrick was certainly formed to obtain favour:—and the public, in general, willingly subscribed to his proposals (though like man and wife they sometimes did not agree):—His coffers were always full, and he was too great an œconomist ever to empty them by the hand of extravagance:—he looked on his Majesty's picture with love and reverence, and never parted with his King's likeness but with the greatest reluctance.—The expences of the house were not then so great as at present; for when I had a benefit at Covent Garden, 1760, I only paid 60l.; now I believe performers pay 120l.; and if Mrs. Jordan acts on that benefit, it is ten guineas more.

It is worthy remark, that with all the boasted improvements, certainly the goings out are immense in proportion to the comings in; and where there was one place open against the theatres then, now there are double—such as various new-established concerts at Hanover-Square, Tottenham-Court, Pantheon, besides Astley's, the Circus, &c. therefore, with the London managers being at double the expence of their predecessors, I can never coincide with the opinions started by dissatisfied performers, or as often hinted at in the news papers. But let us ask, is there a superfluity of principal actors? Certainly no. Are the managers in great

circumstances? Certainly no. One play got up now will cost more than three would, fifty years ago. I have heard great arguments of what encouragement would be given by a third theatre instead of the present, termed monopoly. Were it possible to create three industrious Mr. Sheridans to write for the stage, something might be said and done, but I fear not otherwise; and if people in general find their plays not all perfection with two companies, I cannot conceive that, divided into three, they would be acted better—Nay, is not Mr. Harris reduced (I say reduced, or he certainly would not do it) to cut plays into farces, and give farces instead of plays, and sometimes all farce and no play, with different *boxers*, Mendoza and Humphreys, on the stage, for the entertainment of the first audience in the world? in which he has fulfilled Garrick's prophecy; for the theatre royal at Covent Garden gives a dish of all sorts: And were they twenty years since to have seen such medley play-bills at a third theatre, or from York or Edinburgh, such stuff would have served the whole green-room in London for a week's laugh at the country strollers' expence:—Besides, such productions, if to be tolerated and approved at all, should certainly be permitted only in a summer theatre, when the wine and the weather is hot.

GARRICK'S PROPHECY, 1747.

Perhaps, for who can guess the effects of chance?
Here Hunt may box, and Mahomet may dance,
Ah! let not censure term our fate our choice,
The stage but echoes back the public voice.

As to gentlemen writers of genius being excluded from having their works produced, I cannot think the injustice alledged is by any means founded on truth or equity; for I never can believe, even tho' many good plays were to be sunk in oblivion, but that some of them would again visit the world in print, to gratify the author's pride and reputation, and by such means prove how indifferent managers were to merit:— I do not mean to insinuate that there are not good authors at present capable of affording the highest and most improving additions to the stage catalogue; I only wish to be understood, that the stage is not overstocked with such offers; and it is too probable that authors may have occasion perhaps to complain of indifferent and improper treatment, as a London manager is not, like the Pope, always infallible. I am only speaking by guess, not being acquainted with the facts. It is certain the new pieces brought out, in a general

way, do not please ; and as money is always welcome, I cannot think any projector existing would be at great expence to produce a piece that creates confusion in the theatre, damnation to the author, and if persisted in, he excludes the possibility of crowded houses, besides being well abused in every public print into the bargain. I cannot think Mr. Harris would lavish money on the Prophetess if he had as good a new opera to produce as the Duenna ; (the very run of such a piece as the latter would supply him for half the season) or that Mr. Kemble would produce a comedy, only acted three nights, if he had been presented with one equal to the School for Scandal. And, indeed, how few plays of late seasons reach the ninth night ! What a quantity of plays, farces, and pantomimes, do the three theatres exhibit in the course of the year, and how few succeed ! What perpetual labour and anxiety must the performers undergo, and all end in vexation of spirit,—all for nothing—some few pieces excepted, which need not be enumerated ; as those that live, and are the oftenest acted, prove their public estimation. One great fault has crept into the benefit bills in London, filling them up with such a quantity of interludes, &c.—I am sorry to observe Mr. Garrick was the introducer—he led

the way to what has grown to an enormous height, but I am certain he never meant the ill effects it has established. But his *Farmer's Return*, *Linco's Travels*, &c. wrote as interludes, have considerably lessened the dignity of the drama. It was the practice at my own theatres: I at first, on benefit nights, insisted on all interludes being done as afterludes, but nothing would do, so as to keep the play-bills fit to be seen, they were so loaded with trumpery: so for some years past I have not had any preludes, interludes, or afterludes at all. Mr. Kemble wished, on his night in August 1788, at York, to introduce the *Toy Shop* as an interlude, (which he had formerly done, and which gave great satisfaction on account of his excellent performance of the *Master*); but unless he took it as a farce I was compelled not to suffer it, on account of my established law, which Mr. Kemble, at the head of the profession, breaking through, would have set aside such law by the example from his high authority and judgment. I remember his reply was, "That the act was good, if kept in force; but," added he jokingly, "Mr. Wilkinson, the first benefit bill I shall see of your own night I shall find it full of interludes!" However, it has not happened yet, and I dare say never will to any benefit of mine.

London opinion, though its stamp passes current in provincial towns as to first-rate performers, yet has so fallen in reputation as to pieces, that it is not a recommendation in advertising a new play, but the contrary; and many are never attempted: So that there is no wish to see a new production unless much spoken of, and it has fortunately had a very considerable run; but even that will not always secure its footing. I have great obligations to acknowledge to the School for Scandal, the Poor Soldier, and the Farmer, of modern date.

As I have given an account of the amazing alterations as to the manners practised in the theatres, not much longer ago than our father's prime, yet so quick is the transition, that a few only remain now who can affirm or contradict what I have inserted: A proof how we are deceived by the apparent flowness of the running sand in the hour-glass, which in reality rolls with astonishing rapidity, and waits us dreaming from life to *dusty* death! This is verified, as in the course of these last forty years, few are left to mock their own grinning—tho' Mr. Macklin stands firm, like the venerable old oak that shades the forest—and in the following Tablet it affects me, as if it were the history of a theatrical cathedral which

gives an account of the departed dead, or a transient view of the actor's tombs and monuments.

Now good gentleman, or lady, I will proceed, and introduce the

Actor's Tablet.

It is a tale told by an idiot,

Full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

THIS Repository or Journal, is offered not only to young stage candidates, but at the same time to the attention of all amateurs of the Drama; as it will be a guide, and a more regular information to them, and indeed to the public in general, than anything of the kind yet attempted—though I fear presented in a bungling manner: Still this account of old staggers must be in some degree venerable, as an old coin is in higher esteem with antiquarians than the new, though of less intrinsic worth.—I wish it had the advantage of a better head, but that is past praying for; yet it will be a kind of guide, and convey information by no means publicly known, wherein the reader will find almost an exact list of every theatrical event, with the date of most of the new or revived plays and farces produced—the performers' engagements and

desertions to and from Ireland to the London Theatres—their re-engagements, and the account of singers, dancers, burlettas, incidents, &c. from the year 1747, to the conclusion of 1757.

Mr. Garrick's establishment, as joint manager with Mr. Lacey, was in 1747, and few persons who have been readers of theatrical anecdotes have yet, since the time of Colley Cibber, had any accurate or regular account of those years more than in a general view, though there certainly has been able writers and men of genius who have treated on more important theatrical subjects.

I will here give a list of the companies at Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden in 1747, that the observant reader, unprejudiced, may see what a number of established actors were at that period in one company, and whether there are the same number of *equal eminence* to be called so at present at either Theatre.

The modern critic and actor will undoubtedly admit that every fifty years will make havock and considerable alteration, and what is approved and applauded now, 1790, may not be sanctioned in 1840.—When Mr. Garrick undertook the management, the company collected, was perhaps, take it for all in all, the most powerful ever mustered in the present century.

I will first give as correct a list as I can recollect, then present the cast of two or three plays, and then instance the cast of the same plays in 1789 ; by which means the unprejudiced reflector may draw a fair conclusion ; and perhaps allow it not quite improbable but the play so acted might have been seen with equal pleasure then as now.

DRURY-LANE THEATRE, 1747-8.

MEN.

Messrs. Garrick, Barry, Delane, Macklin, Sparks, Berry, Yates, Havard, Winstone, W. Mills, Arthur, Tafwell, Neale, Mills, Sowden, Lowe, &c.

WOMEN.

Mrs. Cibber, Pritchard, Woffington, Clive, Macklin, Hippeley, (Mrs. Green) Minors, Elmy, Pitt, (now Mrs. Pitt of Covent-Garden) Bennet, Cross, &c.

DRURY-LANE, 1747.

JANE SHORE.

Hastings,
Shore,
Glo'ster,

Mr. GARRICK.
Mr. BARRY.
Mr. BERRY.

Alicia, Mrs. CIBBER.

Jane Shore, Mrs. WOFFINGTON.

N. B. Surely this play was at least tolerably acted.

DRURY-LANE, 1789.

JANE SHORE.

Hastings, Mr. KEMBLE.

Shore, Mr. BENSLEY.

Glo'ster, Mr. J. AICKIN.

Alicia, Mrs. WARD.

Jane Shore, Mrs. SIDDONS.

DRURY-LANE, 1747.

OTHELLO.

Othello, Mr. BARRY.

Roderigo, Mr. YATES.

Iago, Mr. GARRICK.

Emilia, Mrs. PRITCHARD.

Desdemona, Mrs. CIBBER.

DRURY-LANE, 1789.

OTHELLO.

Othello, Mr. KEMBLE.

Iago, Mr. BENSLEY.

Roderigo,

Mr. DODD.

Emilia,

Mrs. WARD.

Desdemona,

Mrs. SIDDONS.

Of the foregoing casts the reader will form an impartial judgment.

DRURY-LANE, 1747.

A set of very capital dancers was this year at Drury-Lane :—Mr. Cooke, Monsieur Grand-champs, Madam Auretti, (in the serious style) in great estimation, and Mademoiselle Janeton Auretti.

A favorite pantomime dance was served up often, called the Savoyard Travellers.

Madame Auretti continued only the season following, when her benefit was commanded by his Majesty George the Second.—Play, the Stratagem.—Mr. Garrick acted Archer.—After which she retired from the stage, and Mr. Cooke went over to Covent-Garden the season following.

The **FOUNDLING**, by Mr. Moore, was first acted in February, 1748.

Young Belmont,

Mr. GARRICK.

Sir Charles Raymond,

Mr. BARRY.

Sir Roger Belmont,	Mr. YATES.
Villiard,	Mr. SPARKS.
Colonel Raymond,	Mr. HAVARD.
Faddle,	Mr. MACKLIN.
Rossetta;	Mrs. WOFFINGTON.
Fidelia,	Mrs. CIBBER.

ALBUMAZER was revived in 1747, by Mr. Garrick, and did not succeed.—From which play the circumstance of the robbery is evidently stolen, and converted into Tony Lumpkin's principal scene of Dr. Goldsmith's very entertaining Comedy of "She Stoops to Conquer."

COVENT-GARDEN, 1747.

The Company was very weak indeed.—Mr. Rich, more from laziness than lack of genius, had not any pantomime in force, but the then very stale one of Merlin's Cave, or Harlequin Skeleton. They played in general only three or four times in the week in January, and often dismissed even in the month of February; for Garrick had swept most of the actors of merit from Covent-Garden to Drury Lane, for his triumphal entry as manager—Quin had retired to Bath in disgust at Garrick's unparalleled success, and there remained with Mr. Rich only as follows:

MEN.

Messrs. Giffard, Beard, Ryan, Theophilus Cibber, Gibson, Collins, Bridgewater, James, Anderson, Paget, Padick, Marten, Bridges, Dunstall, Lalauze, Bencraft, Storer, Stopelear, Rosco, Oates, Leveridge, Lunn, (Mr. Rich as the Harlequin, who always went by that name in the bills) with Mr. Foote as an Auxiliary.

WOMEN.

Mrs. Giffard, Horton, Storer, Vincent, Young, Falkner, Bland, (late Mrs. Hamilton) Morrison, Copin, Dunstall, Ferguson, Allen, Mullart.—
Dancers, Villeneuve, Desse, &c.

COVENT-GARDEN, 1747.

THE BUSY BODY.

Marplot,	Mr. CIBBER.
Sir George Airy,	Mr. RYAN.
Charles,	Mr. GIBSON.
Sir Francis Gripe,	Mr. COLLINS.
Sir Jealous Traffic,	Mr. BRIDGES.
Whisper,	Mr. JAMES.
Habinda,	Mrs. HALE.
Patch,	Mrs. BLAND.
Miranda,	Mrs. GIFFARD.

After which Mr. FOOTE gave TEA.

The RELAPSE.

Lord Foppington,	Mr. CIBBER.
Loveless,	Mr. RYAN.
Worthy,	Mr. RIDOUT.
Lory,	Mr. JAMES.
Syringe,	Mr. COLLINS.
Amanda,	Mrs. HALE.
Berinthia,	Mrs. HORTON.
Miss Hoyden,	Mrs. STORER.
Nurse,	Mrs. JAMES.

With TEA.

LOVE MAKES A MAN.

Carlos,	Mr. GIFFARD.
Clodio,	Mr. CIBBER.
Duart,	Mr. RYAN.
Charino,	Mr. DUNSTALL.
Antonio,	Mr. COLLINS.
Sancho,	Mr. CUSHING.
Louisa,	Mrs. HORTON.
Angelina,	Mrs. HALE.
Elvira,	Mrs. GIFFARD.

Plays so acted at Bath or York, now, would not be deemed more than decent.

The BEGGAR'S OPERA was repeated several nights, and drew more money than any

other play to the deserted house of Covent-Garden at that time.

Macheath,	Mr. BEARD.
Lockit,	Mr. DUNSTALL.
Filch,	Mr. CUSHING.
Peachum,	Mr. ROSCO.
Polly,	Mrs. STORER.

Mrs. Peachum and Diana Trapes,

Mrs. DUNSTALL.

Jenny Diver,	Miss ALLEN.
Lucy,	Mrs. VINCENT.

Mr. Rich having been so negligent in his unrivalled pantomime department, was in consequence little prepared for unfortunate events from the loss of Mr. Garrick; Mr. Quin, Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Cibber, Mr. Woodward, (who went to Ireland) and others of eminence, having the preceding year left him, Covent-Garden remained in an abject ruined state.

WOMAN'S A RIDDLE, was that season revived.

Courtall,	Mr. GIFFARD.
Colonel Manly,	Mr. RIDOUT.
Sir Amorous Vainwit,	Mr. CIBBER.
Aspin,	Mr. COLLINS.
Vulture,	Mr. BRIDGES.
Miranda,	Mrs. GIFFARD.

Clarinda, Miss COPIN.

Necessary, Mrs. BLAND.

Lady Outside, Mrs. HORTON.

(N. B. Mrs. Bland went to Ireland, and on her return, from Mrs. Necessary she sustained the first cast several years at Covent-Garden as Mrs. Hamilton.)

The season was so bad, that in February the benefits commenced; and late in March 1748, Mr. Rich brought forward APOLLO and DAPHNE, which drew good houses.—Harlequin, Mr. PHILLIPS, (who supplied that character as Mr. Rich's substitute, when he did not choose to perform, as Mr. Lun.) The scene of the sun rising had a fine effect; and I am astonished so superb a constructed piece of machinery is not made use of now at Covent-Garden, as introductory to some new pantomime: For the scene with Morpheus, Mystery, and Slumber, preparatory to the appearance of the sun in its meridian had a wonderful effect, and might be displayed in any other pantomime, and be a good opening one: Also that of Daphne's being turned into a tree by the pursuit of Apollo, from the assenting nod of Silenus, the rising Dome, the Lion in Perseus, the Snake, &c. would make good incidents.

In the Spring 1748, was a remarkable and dreadful fire in Cornhill, when Mr. Quin came purposely from Bath, and acted his favourite character of Cato, at Covent-Garden theatre, for the benefit of the poor sufferers, by that dreadful conflagration.

Drury-Lane season 1748-9, Mr. Macklin and wife quitted Drury-Lane for Ireland. Woodward returned to the old house from Dublin, and soon grew into amazing popularity. This year was revived

ROMEO and JULIET.

Romeo, Mr. BARRY.

Mercutio, Mr. WOODWARD.

Juliet, Mrs. CIBBER.

The play had a remarkable run. (Mr. Victor has not taken notice of this circumstance; for the strength of that play was the foundation for the desertion of Mr. Barry, in the year 1750, with Mrs. Cibber.)

Irene, by Doctor Johnson, was acted that season. Also Lethe, which was inimitably performed; not a part but was truly excellent. Merope was acted that year. Garrick looked and acted like an angel (as the ladies said) the part of Eumenes.

Mr. Lee and Mr. Palmer, promising actors, were introduced that season.

The same year the Emperor of the Moon, written by Mrs. Behn, was revived at Drury-lane as a second piece.—Harlequin was tossed in a blanket with a good effect—he had two long slips by which he held—they were imperceptible to the audience: So that Harlequin seemed to the eye most violently tumbled; and the galleries, who love the appearance of mischief, were vastly entertained.

That season Mr. King made his first attempt, as a stage candidate, in the Herald in King Lear; his merit was not paid any attention to by Mr. Garrick; he was, as is theatrically termed, laid up—on the shelf that year, but he was engaged for the summer season at Bristol; where Mr. Whitehead, late Poet Laureat, and Mrs. Pritchard, saw him play the character of Romeo with great applause. He returned to London the winter season, and was astonished, without any notice being given him, to see his name in large letters advertised for George Barnwell,—Millwood, Mrs. Pritchard—He also played Valerius, in Mr. Whitehead's Tragedy of the Roman Father.—He continued there till the end of the season 1749, and in the autumn went over to Ireland, and accepted a very liberal offer from Mr. Sheridan.—At Dublin he continued till the second year after Mr. Woodward's desertion from Drury Lane, to Crow-street Theatre, in Dublin.

Mr. King returned to fill up Mr. Woodward's department, and made his first appearance early in October 1759, in the character of Tom, in the *Conscious Lovers*: his second part was Atall, and his third Sir Amorous Vainwit.—In the character of Brass, Churchill allowed him great merit.

The Play, *Friendship in Fashion*, was attempted to be played in the spring 1749—Mr. Woodward and Mrs. Clive were to sustain the principal characters.—Be it noticed, Dame Clive was not blessed with beauty—though of infinite talents; yet she unfortunately in that Comedy was ideally ravished twice or thrice before the fourth act ended, which the audience very properly judged to be too much for that lady's feelings; and not knowing what might truly happen in the fifth, they consequently put a violent and final stop to all farther indecent proceedings.

The French ambassador was at the play, and seemed to enjoy John Bull engaged in a riot: But at last violation was offered to the King's arms over the front box, at which he seemed much alarmed at the imagined sacrilege, and precipitately retired from the theatre——What an alteration in the conduct of Frenchmen in forty years!

My true respect, duty, and veneration to his Majesty, leads me to hope that no similar accident

will ever occur at York, on any occasion ; as I can boast the best finished, and most elegant *royal arms*, for neatness and perfection, as to workmanship, of any theatre in his Majesty's dominions.—All surprise at this assertion will cease in Yorkshire, when I announce they were executed by those ingenious and well-known artists, the deserving brothers, John and Samuel Fisher, of York.

COVENT-GARDEN, 1748-9.

Several theatrical alterations took place—Mr. Rich was roused from his slumber—Mr. Quin returned to the stage ; and Mr. Delane, Mr. Sparks, Mr. Arthur, Mrs. Woffington, and Miss Pitt were engaged from Drury-Lane; also Miss Bellamy, (by Mr. Victor and others falsely related to have been drawn from her lucrative and splendid situation in Dublin, by Garrick) was actually engaged by Mr. Rich.

Mrs. Bellamy's first appearance was in Belvidera ; which proves Mr. Victor's account of Covent Garden very erroneous. “ Mr. Garrick, (says Mr. Victor and Mr. Hitchcock) from the many opportunities he had of seeing Miss Bellamy's abilities, when they performed together in

Dublin, 1746, was too well convinced of her merit, not to use every means to engage her.—Accordingly he made her proposals, which she immediately accepted ; and she returned to London, where she remained some years in high estimation.”

That Mrs. Bellamy remained for some time in high estimation is well known—but her first appearance, after her departure from Dublin, was not at Mr. Garrick’s theatre, but at Covent garden, as before mentioned : a true and particular account of which, with Mr. Garrick’s *refusal* to engage her, is given in her Memoirs.

Mrs. Ward was also engaged—she was a handsome woman, and a good actress.

Coriolanus, by Thompson, was produced that season ; in which Mr. Quin, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Delane, Mr. Sparks, Mr. Ridout, Mrs. Bellamy, and Mrs. Woffington acted.

Perseus and Andromeda was also produced, and brought several houses—so that Mr. Rich then had three pantomimes on the stocks : the Skeleton, Apollo and Daphne and Perseus. The business of the *petit maitre* in the last mentioned was inimitably done by Mr. Lalmaze ; palpably stolen by Mr. Woodward, and placed in Queen Mab, at Drury Lane, in the year 1750. The scene of the

Dragon, and Perseus on his flying horse, with Andromeda chained to the rock, the rising Dome, and the Lion, were the principal parts of that entertainment; and all done well, as was all pantomime business under the direction of Mr. Rich.

Mr. Arthur did the clown in that pantomime, in which department he was unrivalled; and well understood all the *mechanical* parts of those kind of productions.—Mr. Lowe was Pe seus; Mr. Miles, Harlequin; Miss Falkener, Andromeda.—Mr. Quin's Falstaff, and several of his characters drew great audiences—Mrs. Bellamy was much esteemed—Mrs. Woffington was attractive in Sir Harry Wildair, &c.—and though Drury-Lane was fashionable, yet Covent-Garden was respectable as to entertainment, and in general well attended.

JANE SHORE was thus cast.

Glo'ster,	Mr. QUIN.
Hastings,	Mr. DELANE.
Dumont,	Mr. RYAN.
Alicia,	Miss BELLAMY.
Jane Shore,	Mrs. WOFFINGTON.

The entertainments of the theatre were increased by the addition of two excellent dancers,

Mr. Cooke, and Miss Hilliard.—A Scotch dance was so pleasing, that it continued not only that but three or four seasons after.

This was the year of the quart-bottle conjuror, at the Hay-market ; where the joke drew such a concourse at the expence of John Bull.—It turned out advantageous to the proprietor of Covent-Garden, as at the latter part of that season, Harlequin, to the amazement of crowded audiences, not only went into the quart bottle, but after that Don Jumpedo jumped down his own throat.—These exploits were performed by Harlequin Phillips.

The Provoked Wife was acted with approbation that season at Covent-garden ; for though Garrick was then performing Sir John Brute, yet there were many obstinate critics of opinion, that the character was better conducted by Mr. Quin. Indeed there cannot be any one part acted more differently than that character was by Mr. Garrick and Mr. Quin. Yet had the author been then living, I may venture to pronounce he would have allowed both right. Even the petticoat scene was as opposite in dress and manner as Othello and Desdemona. Yet had Mr. Quin attempted Garrick's mode, or Garrick Quin's, each would have certainly failed.

The play was thus cast at Covent-Garden :

Brute,	Mr. QUIN.
Heartfree,	Mr. RYAN.
Constant,	Mr. RIDOUT.
Razor,	Mr. ANDERSON.
Colonel Bully,	Mr. LOWE.
Taylor,	Mr. COLLINS.
Belinda,	Mrs. HALE.
Mademoiselle,	Miss MORRISON.

(Who played it inimitably.)

Lady Fanciful,	Miss BELLAMY.
Lady Brute,	Mrs. WOFFINGTON.

In the spring 1749, Cato was acted (by order of his Royal Highness Frederick Prince of Wales) by the younger branches of the Royal Family :— His present Majesty spoke the prologue at Leicester-House on the occasion. The conducting of the performance was entirely under the direction of Mr. Quin. His present Majesty's father was a great advocate for the stage, and a warm patron of Mr. Quin's: Indeed his attachment was such, that Quin's salary was equal to a thousand pounds his last season 1750. One political reason was, that all the commands of his Royal Highness (unless on some very particular occasion) Covent Garden

theatre was honoured with, and chiefly out of compliment to Mr. Quin.

The Emperor of the Moon, wrote by Mrs. Behn, was revived at Covent Garden as a first piece, and at some expence. A tapestry scene of figures was very well executed—Doctor Bellardo, by Mr. Sparks; Harlequin, Mr. Cushing; Scaramouch, Mr. Dunstall:—Miss Bellamy, Mrs. Woffington, and Mrs. Ward were in it, but the piece did not succeed; and as Harlequin is the fiddle of the piece, Mr. Woodward must have been excellent, and Mr. Cushing contemptible. I recollect seeing it as a farce, but very wretchedly supported as to decorations, scenery, &c. in Dublin, 1758, where Mr. King was truly whimsical in Harlequin.

The following comedies were thus cast, and acted with success at Covent Garden that season.

CONSTANT COUPLE.

Sir Harry Wildair, Mrs. WOFFINGTON.

Standard, Mr. DELANE.

Vizard, Mr. RIDOUT.

Beau Clincher, Mr. CIBBER.

Young Clincher, Mr. COLLINS.

Smuggler, Mr. ARTHUR.

Tom Errand, Mr. BENCRAFT.

Angelica,	Miss COPIN.
Lady Darling,	Mrs. COPIN.
Parly,	Mrs. DUNSTALL.
Lady Lovewell,	Mrs. WARD.

CARELESS HUSBAND.

Lord Foppington,	Mr. CIBBER.
Sir Charles Easy,	Mr. RYAN.
Lord Morelove,	Mr. DELANE.
Lady Easy,	Mrs. WARD.
Edging,	Mrs. RIDOUT.
Lady Graveairs,	Mrs. HALE.
Lady Betty Modish,	Mrs. WOFFINGTON.

The season concluded with the Constant Couple, and Apollo and Daphne.

DRURY LANE, 1749-50.

Mrs. Cibber did not play. That season Mr. Garrick (shameful to relate) encouraged Mrs. Ward to break articles with Mr Rich, which she was the easier tempted to do, as Miss Bellamy was in possession of most of the characters she wished to play. Edward the Black Prince was acted that season—Barry gained great ground and honour in Ribemont. Master Mattocks appeared that year in the Chaplet, a very pretty entertainment at that time.—Musical pieces then

(King Arthur and the Tempest excepted) were, on our English stage, confined to the common ballad farces.—Mr. Beard was, as a vocal performer, the best actor of SONGS I ever remember—Miss Norris was a charming singer—and Pastora cannot be known but by those who had the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Clive.

Mrs. Cibber having withdrawn was a severe stroke upon the Drury Lane tragedies, Mrs. Ward being but a cold and inanimate substitute; and it fell heavier on Mr. Barry's plays than Mr. Garrick's, as Lear, Macbeth, Richard, with Mrs. Pritchard's Lady Macbeth, &c. would do without Mrs. Cibber; but Castalio, Romeo, Varanes, &c. were ruined without her helping hand: Indeed Barry refused acting Romeo with Mrs. Ward. The Roman Father was brought out that season, where Barry in Publius by no means could appear as an actor (though it shewed his fine figure) in competition with Garrick. Gil Blas was produced that year and damned, and some other pieces, but none of note. Rich not having any thing new, and only repeating the old plays, Lady Jane Gray excepted and the pantomime of the Fair, Drury Lane, unless on particular nights, bore the bell. Garrick's comedy characters, as well as his tragedy, (such as Ranger, Benedick,

Archer, Bayes, Lear, Hamlet, &c.) were sure cards, and all those plays were thoroughly well acted.

COVENT GARDEN, 1749-50.

The company much the same as the year before, unless the loss of Mr. Theophilus Cibber: Mr. Dyer from Ireland was his substitute, a very good actor in sprightly comedy; not striking as to abilities, but sure to please, and never to offend. He played several parts of Mr. Garrick's, such as Ranger, &c. and in Tom was truly excellent;—that was his first part at Covent Garden. Mr. Dyer's figure was very neat, not unlike that of Mr. Lewis's of Covent Garden; but it would be paying Mr. Lewis a very bad complement to draw a comparison in any other respect, as that gentleman's vivacity, neatness, spirit, and energy of expression, is so superior as to cast Mr. Dyer's abilities at a distance, were he now living; as wherever Mr. Lewis's Vapid, Twineall, Mercutio, &c. are mentioned, which he supports with a peculiar whim and vivacity, he by that means sends hundreds joyful to their respective homes: In truth he needs no eulogium, as the truest praise is deservedly thus, that whether Mr. Lewis had pleased the audience in 1700, 1790, or in 1810, he would have an equal claim to the generosity, pro-

tection, and approbation of a sensible, generous, and discerning public.

Garrick's reasoning in verse will explain that idea when perhaps I should only perplex——

Your children cannot feel what you have known,
They'll boast of Quins and Cibbers of their own:
The greatest glory of our happy few
Is to be felt, and be approv'd by you.

Lady Jane Gray was revived by command of his Royal Highness Frederick Prince of Wales, as a second performance by the Royal Family, under the direction of Mr. Quin, at Leicester House. It added much to Mrs. Woffington's reputation. The parts were thus disposed of:——

Pembroke,	Mr. DELANE,
Northumberland,	Mr. SPARKS.
Suffolk,	Mr. RIDOUT.
Gardiner,	Mr. QUIN.
Duchess of Suffolk,	Mrs. HORTON.
Lady Jane Gray,	Mrs. WOFFINGTON.

The above play was performed a number of nights. The line of——

I hold no speech with hereticks and traitors,
used to strike my young imagination so forcibly at ten years old, that I remember it *perfectly* to this very minute.

That year Mr. Rich produced a little sketch of a pantomime called the Fair, in which Mr. Lun (Rich) did Harlequin. Lun had been the name of the famous man who represented Harlequin at Paris ; therefore whenever Mr. Rich appeared as Harlequin, the name of Lun was inserted in the bills. Mr. Garrick paid a compliment to Mr. Rich's Harlequin in the following lines :—

But why a speaking Harlequin? 'tis wrong,
The wits will say, to give the fool a tongue!
When LUN appear'd with matchless art and whim,
He gave the pow'r of speech to ev'ry limb ;
Tho' mask'd, and mute, convey'd his quick intent,
And told in frolic gestures all he meant—
But now the motley coat and sword of wood
Requires a tongue to make them understood.

The famous Turk on the wire was at that time introduced by Mr. Rich in the pantomime of the Fair ; and indeed that was the sole motive of his patching up that entertainment. Mr. Quin and Mrs. Woffington would not play during the representation of that piece, as they thought it degrading to the theatre to have wire-dancers, &c. but as it did not interfere with their plays, and they were paid, and as that trifle brought several good houses, by which means they would have appeared to advantage, they certainly acted wrong.

in duty to the manager, the public, and their own interest :—The public were the only proper judges to decide on the propriety or impropriety ; and if THEY suffered the Grand Turk to exhibit, they should have acquiesced and not withdrawn and pointed out the fault ; which might have worked up a fury against the theatre that would have fallen upon themselves.

Romeo and Juliet was revived in the interim between Quin and Woffington's playing—Romeo, Mr. Lee ; Juliet, Miss Bellamy. Mr. Lee had broke his article and fled to Covent Garden.—Mr. Lee's very peculiar oddity of temper prevented him ever rising to any fixed public estimation.

DRURY LANE, 1750-1.

Miss Bellamy was engaged from Covent Garden, and trained as the Juliet—Woodward was the Mercutio. Mr. Garrick divided the opinion of the town as to his performance in Romeo—Mr. Rich's procession was very grand, and in those spectacles he never had been equalled, nor can be surpassed ; but Garrick did not promise any procession or dirge in his bills, tho' they gave a striking effect and an agreeable surprise.—Mr. Woodward assisted Mr. Garrick with Queen Mab

that season, which eased Garrick much; and the comedies were so well sustained, where Mr. Woodward, Mr. Yates, Mr. Tafwell, Mrs. Pritchard, and Mrs. Clive, were capital, that the fairy wand failed with the old Drury hulk before the wind. A whimsical print was then produced, called the Steel Yards, in which were placed Quin, Barry, Woffington, and Cibber; and in opposition Woodward and Queen Mab, which exultingly bore down all the greater load with the small. This season Mr. Shuter was coming forward greatly as a low comedian at Drury Lane—also Mr. Palmer in the gentlemen in comedy, who afterwards sustained a very considerable cast of the celebrated Mr. Wilkes's comedy-gentlemen, as Sir George Airy, &c.—He some years afterwards married Miss Pritchard.

COVENT GARDEN, 1750-1.

Barry deserted to Covent Garden—Mrs. Cibber also, after a year's retirement, engaged at the same theatre—Macklin and wife came from Dublin, (also Mrs. Elmy) to that theatre—Quin and Woffington remained—Consequently Garrick found the coalition so strong, that he wished to bring over Quin to his interest; but Quin having had the command at Covent Garden, did not wish to be controuled by Mr. Garrick; he there-

fore stuck to his old master, Rich, but not without stipulating for one thousand pounds a year—the greatest salary ever then known to be complied with, or I believe since, except in the case of Mrs. Billington.

This collected body of Imperial forces might strike the boldest with dismay.—The whole conversation was, that Garrick would be ruined by such a powerful opposition ; but they did not, or would not, comprehend that Garrick was really, as he expressed himself——

Arm'd cap-a-pee in self-sufficient merit.

His Macbeth, Lear, Hamlet, Richard, Bayes, &c. stood alone, nor, as he foretold, did his Lear or Hamlet lose their force :—Besides, he had industry, and his troops were under excellent discipline :—Woodward assisted him too in a material point—that of attacking Rich in his deemed invulnerable part—the harlequin department :—for tho' Rich despised actors, he for once in his life, in this season, relied on them, and had nothing to produce as to novelty in the pantomime way of any kind whatever.—Added to that, the performers at Covent Garden were not under any controul : they despised their master—he despised them—and they heartily hated each other.—Quin disliked Barry,

and Barry Quin—and Mrs. Cibber and Mrs. Woffington held each other in the highest contempt.—Mrs. Cibber, when called upon by the manager, was often feignedly or really ill; and though Mrs. Woffington was ever ready for any undertaking for the general welfare, yet that year her pride was touched and irritated so much, that by a refusal one night a great riot ensued, as before mentioned in Vol. III.

Quin and Barry were also averse to assist each other.—King John was called to rehearsal, and Barry was not there. Quin would not attend the next rehearsal; and what Barry settled, Quin was sure, when he came, to contradict.

The House opened that season September 24th, with the MISER.

Miser,

Mr. MACKLIN.

Lappet,

Mrs. MACKLIN.

Second Play was the BUSY BODY.

Marplot,

Mr. MACKLIN.

Patch,

Mrs. MACKLIN.

And on Friday, October 3, was the commencement of the scene of battle between the two houses with the run of Romeo and Juliet.

Romeo, Mr. BARRY.—Juliet, Mrs. CIBBER.

KING JOHN was revived that season thus:

King John,	Mr. QUIN.
King of France,	Mr. RYAN.
Hubert,	Mr. BRIDGEWATER.
Pandolph,	Mr. SPARKS.
Dauphin,	Mr. LACEY.
Prince Arthur,	Miss MULLART.
Bastard,	Mr. BARRY.
Queen Ellinor,	Mrs. ELMY.
Constance,	Mrs. CIBBER.
Lady Blanche,	Mrs. VINCENT.
Lady Falconbridge,	Mrs. BAMBRIDGE.

Two very odd incidents happened during the run of that play. They are in Mr. Davies's Miscellanies ; but as I related them to Mr. Davies, I claim a right to insert them here.—For he was not in London at the time, as he played some seasons at York, Edinburgh, and Dublin; they were as follows:

“On Mr. Barry's endeavouring to repeat the following words in the first act of the play:—

“Well now I can make any Joan a lady——

“He was so embarrassed in the delivery of this single line, that not being able to repeat the words, he was obliged to quit the stage amidst the general

applause of the audience, who saw and felt his uneasiness. But what is still more surprising, after going off, and returning three several times, with the same kind encouragement of the spectators, he was forced to give it up ; and I believe he did not recover himself till he was relieved by the entrance of Lady Falconbridge.

“ Mrs. Cibber, during the representation of that Tragedy at Covent-garden theatre, the year 1750, was suddenly taken ill.—The play was however announced in the bills.—Mrs. Woffington, who was ever ready to shew her respect to the public, and her willingness to promote the interest of her employer, came forward to the front of the pit ready dressed for the character of Constance, and offered, with permission of the audience, to supply Mrs. Cibber's place for that night. The spectators, instead of meeting her address with approbation, seemed to be entirely lost in surprise. This unexpected reception so embarrassed her that she was preparing to retire ; when Ryan, who thought they only wanted a hint to rouse them from their insensibility, asked them bluntly if they would give Mrs. Woffington leave to act Lady Constance?—The audience, as if at once awakened from a fit of lethargy, by repeated plaudits strove to make amends for their inattention to

the most beautiful woman that ever adorned a theatre."

The Refusal was revived by Macklin that winter. Mr. Lee played Granger ; but Mr. Garrick put the law in force for breach of his article, and he was obliged to return to Drury-Lane, where Garrick from that day held a rod of iron over him.

She Would if she Could was revived—a vile play indeed—not relished *then* by any means—*now*, to the credit of the audience, would not be tolerated.—The principal characters were performed by Mr. and Mrs. Macklin, and Mrs. Elmy.

Mrs. Cibber was ill great part of the season. It was the last year of Mr. Quin's playing.—His benefit was about the twelfth of March—Othello the play.—The Moor was acted alternately by him and Barry. When Barry acted Othello, Macklin played Iago : And when Quin acted Othello, Ryan was the Iago.—I wonder Quin's understanding would let him persist in acting Othello, where he was so inferior in every respect to Mr. Barry. Indeed for his last benefit the Prince of Wales commanded Othello.—Quin acted Iago to Barry's Othello ; but strange to relate, with the change of characters, and the command, the house

to that old favorite was very bad. There was not any farce that night ; nor any new play at Covent-garden from the year 1748 till 1753.

The last character Mr. Quin acted, as a regular engaged performer, was on the conclusive night but two in the season, May 20, 1751, Horatio, in the Fair Penitent—Lothario, Barry ; and Calista Mrs. Cibber : the best Calista I ever saw, and most likely, at my time of life, that I ever shall.—Barry not happy in Lothario.

In March 1751—His Royal Highness Frederick Prince of Wales died ; when the theatres were shut up for three weeks ; which proves Miss Bellamy's assertion wrong as to her being at Leicester-House, and the Princess of Wales patronizing her benefit, &c.—the play to be the Siege of Damascus, wishing to see their favourite veteran Quin, in his character of Caled ; which if the reader will observe must be erroneous, for that year Miss Bellamy was at Drury-lane theatre ; and Mr. Davies must be wrong in his date ; for this was the year of the run of Romeo and Juliet, when Mrs. Cibber was at Covent Garden.*

The day his Royal Highness died the tragedy of Jane Shore was appointed at Covent-garden, for the benefit of Mr. Ryan.

* See Bill of Romeo and Juliet, vol. 1. page 31.

Glo'ster,

Shore,

Hastings,

Alicia,

Jane Shore,

Mr. QUIN.

Mr. RYAN.

Mr. BARRY.

Mrs. CIBBER.

Mrs. WOFFINGTON.

And that might certainly be admitted as tolerable.

So different was the practice between then and now, relative to the principal performers acting on benefit nights in London, that Mr. Garrick acted every year from the first to the middling class of performers in general.

Mrs. Woffington the season following quitted Covent-garden for Dublin ; where she was held in such high estimation as to have her salary of four hundred pounds doubled the second and third winter ; which the manager, from an acknowledged sense of her value, judged a debt due to her merit and his own interest. She had also two benefits each season in Dublin. Mr. Victor gives the following description of that lady.—“ So generous was her conduct, though she seldom acted less than four nights a week, that she never disappointed one audience in three winters either by real or affected illness ; and yet I have often seen her on the stage when she ought to have been in her bed.”

Mr. Hitchcock adds the following :—

“ To her honour be it ever remembered, that whilst thus in the zenith of her glory, courted and careffed by all ranks and degrees, it made no alteration in her behaviour ; she remained the same gay, affable, obliging, good-natured Woffington to every one around her. She had none of those occasional illneffes, which I have sometimes seen affumed by capital performers, to the great vexation and loss of the manager, and disappointment of the public : She always acted four times each week.

“ Not the lowest performer in the theatre did she refuse playing for : Out of 26 benefits she acted in 24 ; and one of the other two was for a Mrs. Lee, who chose to treat the town with an exhibition of her own Juliet.—Such traits of character must endear the memory of Mrs. Woffington to every lover of the Drama.”

Mrs. Cibber's benefit, early in March 1759, was *Zara*, revived.

Ozman,

Mr. BARRY.

Zara,

Mrs. CIBBER.

Mr. Quin took *Othello*, as before-mentioned. Mr. Barry, *Romeo and Juliet*—Mrs. Woffington, the *Constant Couple*.—Mr. Cooke's benefit

was on Friday (previous to Prince Frederick's burial), when a capital blunder occurred.—as Mr. Quin's name was printed in capitals for the part of Young Bevil—but Mr. Barry acted the part.—Indiana, by Mrs. Cibber, who hitherto has not been, and in all probability never will be matched in that character. Her manner of saying to Mr. Sealand, “Sir, if you will pay the money to a servant
“it will do as well”—and the whole of her last scene in that play, was so truly affecting, expressive, and natural, that she really caught the ball which all other Indiana's have been running after in vain.

I know it is said that first impressions do a great deal; but I can also assert that from Mr. Garrick, Mr. Quin, Mrs. Bellamy, Mrs. Crawford, and others, I could convey to any hearer a strong idea of their manners, tones, &c. which would be acknowledged and allowed as real traits by the most rigid observer now existing. But Mrs. Cibber's excellence was of that superior kind, that I can only retain her in my mind's eye. Not that all her characters were equally astonishing; for Mrs. Cibber was but a mere mortal: yet, her Alicia, Constance, Ophelia, Indiana, Juliet, &c. were truly her own. Neat simplicity of manners in comedy was equally so. But her fine Ladies, and

parts of striking humour, had better be (as they are) forgotten. This is a great character, but a just one.

The season concluded the two last nights with *Romeo and Juliet*, without any Farce, or Dance, &c.

DRURY-LANE, 1751-2.

Its worthy observation that what leads historical registers perpetually into error, is the confounding the seasons: For as the theatres always open in September, and do not close till early in the following summer, not only the public, but the performers themselves, are too apt to mistake one year for the other, from two dates being unavoidably connected with one season. Many particulars of these times are related in my first volume.

The company remained much as the year before, as I do not remember any particular desertions. Mr. Mossop and Mr. Ross were added, and of great additional strength; for they promised greatly from their first appearances.—Mr. Mossop's *entrée* was in *Richard*, then in *Zanga*—and much applauded. Mr. Ross in *Young Bevil*.—Mr. Dexter also made his appearance that year, and astonished every one in the character of

Oreonoko. His merit had such an effect at first as to promise wonders; and he was prognosticated a powerful adversary to Barry in the Lovers: but when he left his honest black, his white promised nothing; it was a vacuum, and he sunk into oblivion. He went to Dublin, from whence he came. He had been educated in the College there: was in high esteem as a gentleman; and though not an actor of the first class, was gentlemanlike in his deportment, had a pleasing voice, and played second to Mr. Sheridan; but he did not live many years. He was rather dejected at not succeeding on the stage in a more elevated style.

Mr. Wilder removed this year to Drury-Lane: did very little at either theatre; but was much applauded when he sung

“For women love kissing as well as the men.”

N. B. Mr. Wilder played Macbeth forty nights in Dublin, 1756-7.

The Fair Penitent was often acted this season.

Horatio,	Mr. Mossop.
Altamont,	Mr. Ross.
Sciolto,	Mr. BERRY.
Lothario,	Mr. GARRICK.
Calista,	Miss BELLAMY.

Mr. Garrick was the only gentleman I ever saw make the character of Lothario truly conspicuous.

Alfred was revived at infinite expence, and succeeded. Likewise Eastward Hoe, for the Lord-Mayor's Day, (when the practice of acting the London Cuckolds was abolished at that theatre;) but the play was driven off the stage.

Every Man in his Humour was next revived, and with great success. That comedy increased in public estimation for some seasons. Indeed every part in that production of old Ben's was so well acted, it was hard to point out how any one in that very difficult composition could be amended. It was a lucky stroke for Woodward's advancement with the town. His performance of Captain Bobadil was wonderful.

The Shepherd's Lottery, was a very pretty musical piece—Master Vernon (late Mr. Vernon) made his first appearance in that little Opera. The Duet of “By the pale light of the moon,” was always encored at that time, when sung by Mr. Vernon and Miss Norris in that piece.—Harlequin Ranger also was much admired.—Woodward was an excellent Harlequin. In his youth he had been taught that motley character by Mr. Rich, and had well observed that gentleman's instructions.

COVENT-GARDEN, 1751-2.

Mr. Quin had retired from the stage May 1751; in March 1752, and March 1753, he came from Bath purposely to play Falstaff in the first part of **King Henry IV.** for his friend Mr. Ryan's benefit: He after that left him a legacy, and made him a present; declaring he grew infirm, and would not *whistle* Falstaff.

Mrs. Woffington continued in Ireland; so Mr. Barry and Mrs. Cibber had all their own sway.—The Siege of Damascus was revived—Barry, Phocyas; and Mrs. Cibber, Eudocia. Mrs. Cibber also played Lady Townly, (not much to her credit). Venice Preserved was likewise acted, when Barry made his appearance as Jaffier. He had usually played Pierre, and his figure was pleasing and commanding beyond description in that character. Mrs. Cibber's Belvidera was a non-such.—Mr. Rich revived that year the Necromancer, or Harlequin Doctor Faustus; the galleries liked such a dismal sight then, but I do not think it would be now tolerated. It was not pleasing to me at that time, who thought no paradise could exceed a playhouse.

Woodward revived Dr. Faustus, with new scenery and more liveliness several years after at Covent-garden, when it answered to the amusement of the public and the coffers of Covent-garden treasury.—In February, after several years' promise, out came Harlequin Sorcerer, which made old Drury tremble; for any thing like the rage after that pantomime I never remember.

In November 4, 1751, when Mr. Barry and Mr. Sparks were performing Bajazet and Tamerlane, Arpafia, Mrs. Cibber, one of the gentlemen was so suddenly out in his part that the play could not proceed. After a considerable pause, Mrs. Cibber said, "Gentlemen, it is not my turn to speak." After which the play proceeded without any other blunder. This only is mentioned to prove great actors as well as *small* are liable to *blunders*. Mrs. Cibber remains unrivalled in Arpafia, particularly in the frenzy speech of the last act.

Miss Macklin that season played Lady Townly for her father's benefit; also Jane Shore twice, early in the season.

Mrs. Cibber played Lady Macbeth the first time, for her own benefit.

The season closed with Romeo and Juliet, and the Sorcerer.

DRURY-LANE, 1752-3.

The Company much as before ; only the loss of Mrs. Ward, who was neither wanted nor regretted ; as Miss Bellamy's youth, fashion, dress, &c. aided with Mr. Garrick's powerful assistance, enabled her to make a tolerable stand in tragedy against Mrs. Cibber, which Mrs. Ward was by no means equal to. *Eugenia* was acted, but did not succeed on the English stage, notwithstanding its being in great reputation then at Paris ; and the Rev. Mr. Frances, the author, (or rather translator) was in high rank and esteem in London.

Mr. Foote's farce of *Taste* was produced that season—*Lady Pentweazle*, by Mr. Worsendale, a genius of much wit and humour, but it met with a similar fate to *Gil Blas*.—Mr. Garrick's speaking the prologue, (which he wrote for that farce of *Taste*) was judged a master-piece ; and the prologue now speaks for itself, though alas ! Garrick *cannot*.

The *Gamester* was acted—Mr. Garrick wonderful—ay, most wonderful, in *Beverley* !—*Boadicea*—revived by Mr. Glover.—Also the *Genii*, a pantomime, the *Silent Woman*, and the *Brothers*, a tragedy, by Dr. Young ; who gave the profits of his three nights, as an author, to a pub-

lic charity—but the amount not answering his wishes and expectations, he generously made up the sum to one thousand pounds.

COVENT-GARDEN, 1752-3.

Mr. Barry and Mrs. Cibber were in high estimation, and to particular plays drew good houses. But, unless to a pantomime, or something of particular attraction, the boxes were often very thin at the early part of the season; whereas Drury-Lane was constantly attended.—Thin boxes on any night was seldom seen there; as a neatness, decorum, and regularity, pervaded the whole. However Mr. Rich was very industrious that season.—Mrs. Bland was engaged from Ireland, who had made great progress on the Dublin stage. Mr. Giffard, junior, made his appearance in *Lear*, a very improper character; the play was wretchedly acted, when compared with the performance of the same piece at the rival theatre;—or indeed without any comparison at all.—Signor Maranesi, and Signora Bugiani, were that season engaged; two inimitable dancers: the lady's countenance was the most expressive and strong that can be imagined. Their burletta manner, gave strong and neat con-

veyance to whatever they attempted. They drew a great deal of money ; and indeed that luck was not to be wondered at. I have never seen such good *comic* dancers before or since.—Mr. Cooke, and Miss Hilliard, who were excellent as dancers in their way, were also continued. The dances were in such estimation as often to supply the want of a Farce.—The Fair was again revived that year, to introduce Mr. Madox, the famous man on the wire ; who was in the year 1758 drowned on his passage to Ireland ; as was Theophilus Cibber, and several performers.

Besides the dancers mentioned at Covent-Garden that season, there were several good ones, above mediocrity ; Monsieur Grandchamps, and Madame Camargo.—Saturday, January the thirteenth, the Sorcerer was again produced, and continued, with almost equal effect, to the finishing of the season. It was helped by an additional fountain scene ; the machinery of which I think surpassed any pantomime quirk I remember, and should be now introduced.—Mr. Smith's first appearance was on Monday, Jan. 8, 1753, in the character of Theodosius ; acted four successive nights.—The Earl of Essex, a tragedy, written by Mr. Jones, (an Irish bricklayer,) was acted that year, and had a considerable

run.——Those who saw Mr. Barry in *Effex*, need not be reminded, that for attitude, and pathetic expression of voice and countenance, they have not beheld a parallel to that gentleman's pronouncing in the last act, when the Lieutenant urges the Earl to proceed to immediate execution, *Effex* turns to the Lieutenant, (pointing to his Countess fainting on the ground,) and replies—"O look there!"—the whole pit of critics actually burst into tears; and then shook the theatre with unbounded and repeated applause, accompanied with huzzas.—The play was well acted—Mrs. Bland was happy in person and manner in *Queen Elizabeth*, which luckily placed her in a rank of estimation.—To relate that Mrs. Cibber, as the Countess of Rutland (though a short part) was excellent, would be superfluous: Her Epilogue, written by Mr. Garrick, (to whom she was to return the winter following) was a powerful assistant to the play.—That was, to my supposition, the best season Mr. Rich had ever experienced in my memory.

Mr. Barry was at that time in the prime of life, as to health and vigour; and Mrs. Cibber also at her best. No wonder such a pair of lovers obtained the triumph they were entitled to: Indeed it was a pity they were ever separated; for no two persons were so calculated to assist each other by

voice, manner, and real feeling, as Mr. Barry, and Mrs. Cibber.

Mr. Smith's second part on the stage was Southampton, in the play of Essex.—Mrs. Cibber's benefit that year was All for Love, with her neat little piece of the Oracle.

On Saturday, May 26, 1753, the season closed with Romeo and Juliet, by Mr. Barry, and Mrs. Cibber; which proved a separation of two lovers, doomed never—no, never to meet again!

I here publish a bill of that season, to shew how difficult it must have been to satisfy eager claimants for being distinguished.—It occasioned much murmuring. Sometimes a lady took the lead, and her rival was bottomed; and the hero placed in the middle;—but all would not do: And in the year 1757, the line of *performed* was obliterated, and the great letters for the principal were continued; which Mr. Kemble, for his own ease, and quiet of the theatre, has entirely banished.

For the BENEFIT of
Signor MARANESI, and Miss HILLIARD,

THEATRE-ROYAL, in *Covent-Garden*.

This present Monday, being the 30th of April, 1753,

THE DISTRESS'D MOTHER.

The Part of PYRRHUS to be performed
By Mr. S P A R K S.

Pylades, by Mr. RIDOUT.—Phoenix, by Mr. ANDERSON.

The Part of ORESTES to be performed

By Mr. B A R R Y.

Cephisa, Mrs. BARRINGTON.—Cleone, Mrs. GRIFFITH.

The Part of HERMIONE to be performed

By Mrs. B L A N D.

And the Part of ANDROMACHE to be performed

By Mrs. C I B B E R.

With several Entertainments of DANCING by
Signor MARANESI, Signora BUGIANI,
Mr. COOK, and Miss HILLIARD, viz.

End of Act Second, a New Dance, called

G U A S T A T O R E;

By Signor MARANESI, and Signora BUGIANI.

End of Act Third, the SCOT'S DANCE

By Mr. COOKE, and Miss HILLIARD.

End of Act Fourth, a MOCK MINUET,

By Sig. MARANESI, and Signora BUGIANI.

End of the Play, a MINUET, and LOUVRE,

By Mr. COOKE, and Miss HILLIARD.

To which will be added a Musical Farce, (acted there but twice) called

The LOVER his Own RIVAL.

The Part of Clerimont, by Mr. LOWE.

Fretful, by Mr. Collins.

Frederick, by Mr. Cusbing.

Matchwood, by Mr. Bennett.

Lucy, by Miss Pitt.

And the Part of Harriet, by Mrs. CHAMBERS.

Boxes 5s.—Pit 3s.—First Gall. 2s.—Upper Gall. 1s.

DRURY LANE, 1753-4

Mrs. Cibber, at high terms, was engaged at Drury Lane :—Her first appearance was in *Monimia—Chamont*, Mr. Garrick ; *Castalio*, Mr. Ross ; and it is certain in love characters Mrs. Cibber never appeared to such advantage as when with Mr. Barry. *Romeo and Juliet* was attractive when she and Mr. Garrick acted in those parts ; but still in the love scenes she wanted her former *Romeo*. Mr. Garrick, indeed, in the scenes of fire, had the superiority ; but as the lover, Barry was then, and is, unrivalled, and will be till such another starts up ; but think I may prophecy that will not happen in my time, were I to double my years with renovated youth.—Indeed, let a theatrical historian look back, and he will not find an actor so excellent, as a lover, from the days of *Betterton*, as Mr. Barry, to the present stage-strut hour.

Miss Macklin was then engaged, and (her mother from *Covent Garden* :) Miss M. at that time was a very fashionable actress, accomplished, and seemed to promise well ; but having acquired a sufficiency, and grown tired of the profession, she retired several years ago from the stage, and died in some degree of affluence.

That season *Virginia* was produced in February—Mr. Garrick did *Virginus* ; Mossop, Ap-

pius ; Mrs. Cibber, Virginia ; and Marcia was the first appearance of Mrs. Graham (the late Mrs. Yates) who afterwards stood forth as an honour to the British stage :—Her beautiful figure and merits are too well remembered to need encomium or repetition here. Mrs. Graham was not considered of much promise by Mr. Garrick, as she was not retained :—But Mrs. Cibber's illness, Mr. Murphy's incessant pains, with Mr. Garrick's necessities from Mrs. Cibber's indisposition, was a lucky circumstance for that lady and the public, and produced that charming and beautiful actress, who otherwise had pined unknown from the first season, and never been more remembered, but, like a lily drooping, pined and died.

Mr. Garrick wrote the following introductory lines for her in February 1754.

If novelties can please, to night we've two——
 Tho' *English* both, yet spare 'em as they're new——
 To one at least your usual favour show——
 A female asks it, can a man say no ?
 Should you indulge our * novice yet unseen,
 And crown her with your hands a tragic queen ;
 Should you with smiles a confidence impart,
 To calm those fears which speak a feeling heart ;
 Assist each struggle of ingenuous shame
 Which curbs a genius in its road to fame,

* A new Actress.

With one wish more, her whole ambition ends——
She hopes some merit to deserve such friends.

Creusa was produced that season with a double epilogue—the one by Mrs. Pritchard, the other by Miss Haughton; the Knights, by Mr. Foote; and Fortunatus, a very pleasing pantomime, by Mr. Woodward—Madame Marriot was the Columbine *that* and for several seasons—a beautiful and pleasing figure.

COVENT GARDEN, 1753-4.

Mr. Barry having lost Mrs. Cibber as his Juliet, lamented thus in his prologue:——

In such sad plight what could poor Romeo do?
Why faith, like modern lovers, seek a new;
And happy shall I think me in my choice,
If she's approv'd of by the public voice.

Miss Nossiter, on Wednesday, October 10, made her first appearance; she was not much more than the age of Juliet; was possessed of a handsome fortune and genteel education, strong sensibility and feeling, and what added to the performance, Romeo and Juliet were really in love, and well known to be so. She threw strokes in many passages that were not only genuine but forcible, and had fair in time to supply the place of a Cibber;

but notwithstanding the advantages of youth, and meeting wonderful encouragement, Nature had not endowed her with voice and powers sufficient for the arduous task to stand against her rival, and they appeared weakened, the more she was seen, instead of gaining ground.—Indeed I think I never saw her play so well as the first season; neither was her voice musical, and her mouth was remarkably wide, but she drew to all her characters. She acted Juliet a number of nights. Her second part was Belvidera, and in the mad scene did wonders from tuition, attention, and strong understanding: Rutland the third; and Philoclea, brought forward and wrote purposely to shew her to advantage by Macnamara Morgan.—Mr. Barry took infinite pains with Pyrocles; Mr. Smith did Musidorus; but the tragedy was a strange, lame, sick play, and with difficulty languished till the ninth day, when poor Philoclea died a natural death, and was not basely and cruelly murdered, as Mrs. Bellamy falsely and invidiously relates, as Mr. Smith can testify; for, on the contrary, the applause was so violent the first night of representation, and the Irish gentlemen's party so strong in its support, that Mrs. Bland was obliged to repeat a coarse epilogue, which was as coarsely spoken.

Constantine was also produced at Covent-Garden that year, and shared an unhappy fate.

Miss Bellamy returned here from Drury Lane; but the relation in her book, relative to that matter, being far from authentic, for the sake of theatrical truth and history I give the following accounts: Thus far indeed she acknowledges, viz. "The frequent mistakes which I find I have made in the chronology of my Theatrical Anecdotes, will, I hope, be imputed to my reciting them, as I have already observed, entirely from memory; and the deviation, I trust, will be excused by my readers, as the incidents themselves, though perhaps erroneous in point of time, are real facts. And was I now to set about correcting the error by an alteration of the dates, I fear, as many of them happened at so distant a period, such a step would only be productive of greater mistakes.

"I have received some corrections on this head from Mr. Wilkinson, manager of the York company, for which I acknowledge myself much obliged to him, though I cannot, for the reason just given, avail myself of them."

As Tate Wilkinson I here note, that Constantine was acted that season, and shared an unhappy fate. Miss Bellamy's situation was, as she has described, in Fluvia, TRUTH; but the play was acted to a fine house on its first night of representation, and the third act received loud applause, particularly from Barry's conclusion of it;

he also received three plaudits from his manner of pronouncing these two lines in the prologue——

Their heroes seem of a superior state,

Great in their virtues, in *their vices* GREAT.

After the third act it grew very languid, and the curtain dropped, with the audience more fatigued than enraged.

Miss Bellamy must have been determinably wrong as to her account of Constantine being damned the first night of representation: It was first acted on Saturday, February 23, 1754; also on the Monday and Tuesday following: The third night, as usual, for the benefit of the author; but the play was unfortunately so ill attended and disapproved, that it was again put up on Thursday, February 28, the fourth night, for the benefit of the author.—The following insertion was at the bottom of the bill:——

“*N. B.* The receipt of last night not answering, Mr. Rich has taken it to himself.”

“On Saturday next (by his Majesty’s command)

“**VENICE PRESERVED.**”

Which significantly insinuated Constantine was in a decline. Had the play met a better fate, Miss Bellamy’s situation was such as must have precluded it

some time, as that tragedy was with difficulty hurried thro', the Empress Fulvia being brought to bed that very fourth night, and like a woman of spirit she appeared soon after in the penitent Jane Shore for her own benefit: Mr. Foote acted in the Knights that said evening, and gave an imitation of Mr. Garrick in the prologue, who had wrote and spoke that season the following lines:—

I read no Greek, Sir—When I was at school
Terence wrote prologues—Terence was no fool.

Which lines Foote thus ridiculed, and in manner very like the Garrick, and with effect:—

I read no Greek, Sir—When I was at school
The usher wrote prologues—the usher was no fool.

Miss Bellamy mentions also the great expence Mr. Rich was at in reviving Buziris, which is a dream of her own invention, as Mr. Barry revived that play Monday, March 22, 1756, for his own benefit, two years LATER than her account, and was acted to a very indifferent house. The stage was built, but the seats were empty. Mr. Foote acted Hartop in the Knights that evening, to oblige and serve Mr. Barry.

Mrs. Bellamy also relates, that on her return to Covent Garden, on her appearing in Juliet with Barry, that the tragedy had a run exceeding

that of opposition 1750. It is so little connected with truth, and is so very erroneous, that on the contrary, when she returned to Covent Garden on the season's opening in the autumn 1754, Miss Nossiter was, as before-mentioned in my Memoirs, the Juliet; which character Miss Bellamy at that time never had acted with Mr. Barry, nor ever did till so late as the 26th of December 1755. Her first appearance in 1753, on her return, was on Tuesday the 20th of November, in a very improper character; as was her second on Thursday, November 22 (her situation considered): She was thus announced in the bills, "Athenais, by Miss Bellamy, her first appearance this stage these three years." After the chaste Athenais, the pure Monimia followed, which led to strange ideas that Castalio most certainly had been acquainted with that lady long before the third act. After that season (and not before it was necessary) she wisely changed the appellation of *Miss* to *Mrs.* Bellamy.

That lady's life being published, my own remarks, and intimacy with her as an acquaintance, friend, and actress, will not, I hope, make the following genuine letters unexceptionable, as it draws as near to the finish of that once admired

character as the feeling heart or eye would wish to penetrate.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I HAVE been so out of spirits that I have not
“ been able to do any thing but correct my Apo-
“ logy, which I have finished with an address to
“ her Grace of Devonshire, who has honoured
“ me with a pension. Thalia has not yet visited
“ me, therefore I have laid my comedy in laven-
“ der for some favourite of the laughing muse to
“ finish. I am engaged in a polemical contro-
“ versy, which I hope to gain reputation by, tho’
“ my language is rather severe. My leg is very
“ bad, my pocket very low, and my spirits quite
“ gone. I have had a bill just brought me of
“ sixty-eight pounds for Mr. Willet’s *amicable suit*,
“ as well as some bills I gave, which makes me
“ very uneasy ; one to Usher for twenty-nine
“ for which he chose to introduce an officer to
“ escort me once more to Parsons, and absolutely
“ must get the rules of the King’s-Bench if I do
“ not pay the money on Saturday. I have not
“ heard from Mr. ——— ; I suppose his letter
“ and visit were only a spurt of feeling, which soon
“ subsided. My son has settled a hundred pounds
“ a year, but a guinea more I cannot expect, as he
“ is really distressed himself, and he was inconve-

"nienched by advancing ten pounds. Could I
 "have got a frank, which I will try again for, I
 "will send you the lines to her Grace; but you
 "must not shew them. I fear I shall never be
 "able to walk without assistance; and, to add to
 "my comforts, I have a cough that tears me to
 "pieces. I am removed to my Doctor's, No. 6,
 "Cleveland-Row, St. James's, and am so high-
 "minded as to lodge up two pair of stairs, which
 "really may be compared to Jacob's ladder. It
 "gives me singular pleasure to hear you are better.
 "Your friend Mrs. — has kicked down the
 "pail I find. Miss Brunton bids fair to share
 "reputation with Mrs. Siddons. I had the great
 "honour of being wrote to by Mr. Digby to wait
 "upon her Majesty on Thursday, but my indis-
 "position prevents my having that happiness at
 "present, which is doubly distressful, as I am in
 "real want on all sides at present; yet with all
 "my calamities I have the happiness of being re-
 "garded by men of the first sense, whose friend-
 "ship I am proud of—among the number you are
 "set down. Return my regard by taking care of
 "your health, which no person more sincerely
 "wishes than, my dear Tate,

"your friend and servant,

"G. A. BELLAMY."

The gentleman alluded to in the foregoing letter sent her 50l. yet she wanted ditto, ditto, as the instant it was got, the same instant was it squandered.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I SHOULD immediately have thanked you for
“your last favour, but have been so afflicted with
“the rheumatism in my right arm I can hardly
“hold a pen, which impedes my sixth volume.
“Were I to make so many alterations as you
“point out necessary as to facts, I must write the
“whole over again, as I wrote merely from me-
“mory; and as I have acknowledged your wished-
“for alterations in print, my incorrectness I hope
“will be excused. I hope to see you soon in
“London, and in a happier situation than at pre-
“sent, as every being to whom I was the least
“indebted has called upon me by arrest and co-
“pies of writs, which has accumulated my de-
“mands to above four times what they were ori-
“ginally. As to Bell, I have no cause of com-
“plaint in money affairs, as he stood forth for
“me in my distress; and as the success of the
“books was precarious, I only am concerned he
“did not, according to promise, give me the sti-
“pulated sets for the subscribers before he dis-
“posed of his. I desire you will not pay postage,

“ for I shall always be happy to hear from you,
 “ as I am, most sincerely,

“ with great esteem,

Charles-street,

“ your humble servant,

April the 12th.

“ G. A. BELLAMY.”

“ MY DEAR TATE,

“ I WROTE some months ago to thank you
 “ for your ham, but have had no answer. After
 “ having parted with my last guinea, and even
 “ my necessaries, to avert my present unpleasing
 “ residence, in order to obtain the rules, I was
 “ obliged to draw upon my son, and my lovely
 “ patroness, the Duchess of Devonshire, up to
 “ Michaelmas quarter. The impositions are in-
 “ credible, as the people live by the distresses of
 “ others. I am obliged to give sixteen shillings a
 “ week for an apartment—a chandler's shop in
 “ front, backwards a carpenter's; and what with
 “ the sawing of boards, the screaming of three
 “ ill-natured brats, the sweet voice of the lady of
 “ the mansion, who is particularly vociferous with
 “ all the gossips who owe her a penny, with a
 “ coffee-mill which is often in use, and is as
 “ noisy as London-bridge when the tide is coming
 “ in, makes such unpleasing sounds, it is impossible
 “ to think of any thing; added to this, I have not
 “ a place for a servant. Could I raise sufficient

“ to furnish me an apartment, I should be tolerably easy, as I have begun a work which seems to flatter success, though a great undertaking, *The Characters of my own Times*.

“ Could I raise by subscription to enable me to obtain quiet, I could live at half the expence, and be as easy as my situation would admit. *They tell me it is my birth day, that is, the day of the month*, for I see nobody, not even the person I most esteem upon earth, and who flatters me he is my friend, Mr. A——. If you should happen to see Mr. ———, perhaps upon this occasion he might stand my friend. Could I borrow about thirty or forty pounds for a year, I could with certainty repay it, as I am determined to receive no visits, and to live as frugal as possible. Indeed for want of exercise I have no appetite, and am reduced to one old cotton gown.—Oh! what a falling off is there? But I regret it less as I cannot stir alone without difficulty.

“ If you write, direct to No. 37, Eliot's-Row, St. George's Fields, and believe me, most sincerely yours,

May 4, 1786.

“ G. A. BELLAMY.”

“ DEAR TATE,

“ I RECEIVED yours yesterday, and am surprised at your losing so many of your performers. In

“ answer to my not changing my lodging—I can-
“ not without furniture, for the place is over-
“ stocked, and I pay sixteen shillings a week for a
“ dog-kennel, and have not even a bed for my
“ maid. I have been obliged to draw for my
“ annuity till Christmas, as every thing here is
“ paid for before-hand. I do not see Bell, but will
“ convey your request to him. Dodsley I pur-
“ pose for my man, if I cannot get a friend to
“ pay the expence upon my own account: It is
“ the characters of the time since forty-five, and
“ hope to have permission to dedicate it to Roy-
“ alty,—*not* his Royal Highness again. How can
“ you ask me how I came to be involved? I told
“ you before, I paid part of my old debts, and
“ renewed securities for the remainder; which in-
“ discretion has been productive of every distress
“ as well as reproach, in lieu of their being sen-
“ sible that I paid all I received, and was most
“ cruelly deceived in the expectation of paying
“ every body. I am as lame as ever, and as the
“ bone can never be set, shall never be able to
“ walk without assistance. I suppose Mrs. Craw-
“ ford will bring you money—such unprincipled
“ people are generally lucky*. I fear it would
“ be only losing time to apply to Mr. ———”

* A strange remark from my friend Bellamy.

“ as he answered neither of my letters. If I
 “ could get furniture I could get a house for a
 “ trifle, where at least I should enjoy quiet.

“ I am, most sincerely,

“ your affectionate

Eliot's-Row,

“ humble servant,

May the 13th.

“ G. A. BELLAMY.”

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I have the pleasure to inform you Mr. Wood-
 “ ward gained his cause the twenty-fourth of last
 “ month ; by which I have not got any thing but
 “ the credit of confuting Willet. If you read the
 “ Morning Chronicle of the fourth of August,
 “ you will find my letter to the Rev. Mr. Gaboll,
 “ which will explain the affair. I have wrote an
 “ answer to Willet's pamphlet, but am advised
 “ not to publish it till winter. I was in hopes to
 “ have been able to furnish an apartment, which
 “ would have enabled me to have lived cheap,
 “ and enjoy quiet, which is impossible in my pre-
 “ sent residence : But nothing but disappointment
 “ and vexation attends me ; nor can I settle to any
 “ thing of consequence where I am. I am greatly
 “ afraid I have some how offended Mr.——
 “ which would give me more pain, than his with-
 “ drawing his assistance. In almost the certainty of
 “ money, I took a small house, and disposed of her

“ Grace of Devonshire’s quarter to put up fix-
 “ tures, &c. but credit I cannot hope in the pre-
 “ dicament I now stand ; and my annuity will not
 “ be clear till Christmas. I hope Mr. Bell has
 “ sent you the beginning. I very seldom see him ;
 “ but had I had the power I should have saved him
 “ the trouble. I hope the races will bring you a
 “ good harvest.—You may see me, as I really am,
 “ (an old woman) in this day’s Chronicle, and
 “ soon as a Magdalen. Mr. Woodfall is an old
 “ acquaintance, and has all my leisure hours.—
 “ When you have time let me hear from you ; as
 “ you have no correspondent who has a more sin-
 “ cere regard for you.

“ I am, with esteem,

No. 39, *Eliot’s-Row*, “ your humble servant,
St. George’s Fields, “ G. A. BELLAMY.”

August 11.

“ I shall in winter present you with your epi-
 “ taph : But let the galled horse wince, you have
 “ no occasion.”

“ MY WORTHY FRIEND,

“ You need not enforce my error ; I am too
 “ sensible of it : For though the debts I have given
 “ fresh security for were such as would not have
 “ oppressed me, yet with the unexpected ideas I had

“ of security in being able to pay, I indiscreetly
“ not only paid every guinea I received from a ge-
“ nerous public, but gave fresh securities. What
“ I shall do is now a matter of great vexation:—
“ But God’s will be done.—I am concerned to
“ hear of your ill state of health. I sincerely wish
“ I had the power, as I have the inclination to shew
“ myself essentially your *friend*; which epithet
“ you have favoured me with. You do not
“ inform me if Mr. ——— received my letters: If
“ he has, there is little hopes I fear from that
“ quarter. I wish you had shewn him my letter;
“ the one I received, with only the words, *God*
“ *for ever bless you*, seemed by the great care in
“ the envelope, to speak more than the simple
“ benediction, but nothing more by the care of
“ the messenger. I did imagine it came from my
“ worthy benefactor. If you have an opportunity
“ mention this event, as I cannot write to a per-
“ son utterly unknown.—I will correct the af-
“ fair of Chalmers*; but could not understand
“ your incomprehensible letter. I imagine you
“ do not attend to disputes of theology; else I
“ would send you a letter I intend soon to publish.
“ I have treated the author I have answered per-
“ haps in too ludicrous a light; but his ignorance
“ and impudence deserve it. Let me intreat you

* The description of me and Chalmers meeting in Scot-
land is now printed in Bellamy’s sixth volume.

“ to take care of yourself, for the sake of your fa-
 “ mily and intimates ; for few indeed, deserve
 “ the appellation of ; but believe me most sin-
 “ cerely so, and with esteem, while

Sept. 23.

“ G. A. BELLAMY.”

A few months after the last letter, the good-na-
 tured and unthinking Bellamy, by her death, paid
 all her debts.—I hope she is happy ; as she
 endeavoured to promote to the comforts of others,
 and never employed either riches or talents, when
 in affluence and splendor, to render any one mise-
 rable.

Bellamy's letters lead me to fear that too many
 persons, performers, and others, may look back on
 all *their former days*, and pronounce, the only com-
 fort the review affords is, that *they are past* !—Ill fate
 often attends geniusses, for as they possess more sal-
 lies of quickness, they are more subject to frailties ;
 which occasions them to feel at times a want of some-
 thing more substantial than good spirits to feed and
 clothe them ; as the following well-fancied epistle
 will prove :—It is an original, for the which favor
 I stand indebted to the ingenious Dr. Miller,
 of Doncaster ; who is now busily employed on a
 divine composition for psalmody. It was wrote by
 the late true son of Momus, the well-known
 George Alexander Stevens, and I trust the infer-

tion of it will be acceptable, as the novelty of his ideas will entertain, his genius being at that time in its full vigour.

“ DEAR SIR,

Yarmouth Gaol.

“ When I parted from you at Doncaster, I imagined, long before this, to have met with some oddities worth acquainting you with. It is grown a fashion of late to write lives:—I have now, and for a long time have had, leisure enough to undertake mine—but want materials for the latter part of it: For my existence now cannot properly be called living, but what the painters term *still life*; having, ever since February 13, been confined in this town gaol for a London debt.

“ As a hunted deer is always shunned by the happier herd, so am I deserted by the company*, my share taken off, and no support left me, save what my wife can spare me out of hers.

“ Deserted in my utmost need,

“ By those my former bounty fed”——

“ With an œconomy, which till now I was a stranger to, I have made shift hitherto to victual

* Norwich Company.

I

“ my little garrison ; but then it has been with the
“ aid of my good friends and allies—my clothes—
“ This week's eating finishes my last waistcoat ;
“ and next I must atone for my errors on bread
“ and water.

“ *Themistocles* had so many towns to furnish his
“ table ; and a whole city bore the charge of his
“ meals. In some respects I am like him ; for I
“ am furnished by the labours of a multitude.—A
“ wig has fed me two days—the trimmings of a
“ waistcoat as long—a pair of velvet breeches paid
“ my washerwoman, and a ruffled shirt has found
“ me in shaving.—My coats I swallowed by
“ degrees : The sleeves I breakfasted upon for
“ weeks—the body, skirts, &c. served me for din-
“ ner two months.—My silk stockings have paid
“ my lodgings, and two pair of new pumps ena-
“ bled me to smoke several pipes. It is incredi-
“ ble how my appetite (barometer like) rises in
“ proportion as my necessities make their terrible
“ advances. I here could say something droll
“ about a good stomach ; but it is ill jesting with
“ edge tools, and I am sure that's the sharpest
“ thing about me.—You may think I can have
“ no sense of my condition, that while I am thus
“ wretched, I should offer at ridicule : But, Sir,
“ people constitutioned like me, with a dispropor-
“ tionate levity of spirits, are always most merry,

“ when they are most miserable ; and quicken like
 “ the eyes of the consumptive ; which are always
 “ brightest the nearer a patient approaches to
 “ dissolution. ——— However, Sir, to shew you I
 “ am not entirely lost to all reflection, I think
 “ myself poor enough to want a favour, and
 “ humble enough to ask it here. ——— Sir, I
 “ might make an encomium on your good-nature
 “ and humanity, &c. ——— but I shall not pay
 “ so bad a compliment to your understanding,
 “ as to endeavour, by a parade of phrases, to
 “ win it over to my interest. If you could, any
 “ night at a concert, make a small collection for
 “ me, it might be a means of obtaining my li-
 “ berty ; and you well know, Sir, the first people
 “ of rank abroad will perform the most friendly
 “ offices for the sick : Be not, therefore, offended
 “ at the request of a poor (though a deservedly
 “ punished) debtor.

“ G. A. STEVENS.”

From this facetious letter of George Stevens's,
 and Mrs. Bellamy's latter account, we must re-
 member in this stage-journal I was busily em-
 ployed a few pages back, with an account of the
 season 1753-4 ; where I still am supposing myself
 giving an account, though I have been wandering
 on matters not relative thereto : But from Mrs.

Bellamy, and the other personages mentioned of at that time, I must add, that Mrs. Gregory also made her first appearance on any stage, in the character of Hermione, Thursday, January 10, 1754. It was falsely reported, that Mr. Barry refused playing Orestes, fearing her success should interfere with Miss Nossiter's.—The story gained such credit, that he judged it necessary to publish an advertisement in all the papers, contradicting the malicious propagation. That lady grew into the highest fashion afterwards at the Dublin theatre: She married a gentleman bred to the bar in Ireland; a Mr. Fitzhenry, a gentleman of family and abilities; and took leave of the public at Dublin, within these four or five seasons; having wisely provided, from her gains on the stage, to live decently and comfortably off.—After all the storms of a theatrical life, I ever cast a wishful eye, whenever I read success accompanied with such comfortable finishings.

This was the first winter also for Italian burlettas at Covent-Garden theatre.—Signora Nicolina (better known and remembered from the character of Spilletta, which she inimitably performed, in the opera of *Gli Amanti Gelosi*) was particularly admired in the Italian song with the hat, which some years since has been translated, introduced, and sung by Diana, in the pleasing

opera of Lionel and Clarissa. The burlettas that year brought Mr. Rich a great deal of money.

Mr. Garrick thus alludes to their success :

I, as your cat'rer, would provide you dishes,
Dress'd to your palates, season'd to your wishes—
Say but you're tir'd with boil'd and roast at home,
We too can send for *niceties* from Rome :
To please your taste will spare not pains nor money,
Discard *Sirloins*, and get you *Maccaroni*.
Whate'er new *Gusto* for a time may reign,
Shakspeare and beef will have their turn again.

The season again closed at Covent-Garden, Wednesday, the twenty-second of May, with *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Harlequin Sorcerer*.

Mr. Shuter had quitted Drury-Lane for Covent-Garden ; where he grew weekly, ay nightly, into favour with the public. Mrs. Bland was become Mrs. Hamilton.—It is very strange, but true, that Shuter was only looked upon as a young man of tolerable merit at Drury-Lane, (the Old Man, in *Lethe*, his principal part)—but at Covent-Garden he seemed a sudden blaze of light.—This certainly must be allowed an instance, that, with genius, opportunity is every thing ; but the misfortune is, without talents and genius, actors will be claiming the same right of ascending the

throne of merit ; but the ladder suddenly breaks, and down drops Dido.

DRURY-LANE, 1754-5.

The company remained much as the year before. Mr. Garrick was truly inimitable in Don John.—Mrs. Clive was equal in the Mother. Mr. Yates in the old whimsical character of Don Antonio—and the whole comedy was supported, as it might be wished every play should be.

Barbarossa was produced that year, and was much followed.—The Chances, revived and altered by Mr. Garrick, at the command of his late Majesty, had a great run ;—and Coriolanus was got up ; in which character Mr. Mossop raised his reputation. Mr. Garrick was a quick general, and it is most probable Mr. Mossop would not have had the luck of that play being produced at such expence, but that Mr. Garrick was eager to get the start of the rival theatre, where it was preparing with infinite pomp and splendour. The very idea of a triumphal procession at Covent-Garden, struck terror to the whole host of Drury, however big they looked and strutted on common occasions.

The Sabatinis were engaged this year at a great expence, as dancers. They appeared in two new Ballads, the one called the Pandours, the other, the Italian Fishermen ; but they were both utterly disapproved; and did not appear six nights during the whole winter.—The Drummer also was revived ; and tolerably well received and followed.

The Fairies, an opera, from Shakspeare's Midsummer Night's Dream, was that year introduced. It was well performed, and with good success ; aided not a little by an excellent prologue, and as excellently spoken by Mr. Garrick.—Giordani and Passerini were of great additional service, as Lyfander and Hermia.

The Mistake was revived for Woodward's benefit.

Don Carlos,	Mr. GARRICK.
Sancho,	Mr. WOODWARD.
Lopez,	Mr. YATES.
Jacintha,	Mrs. CLIVE.
Leonora,	Mrs. PRITCHARD.

Mercury Harlequin was the new pantomime that season.

COVENT-GARDEN, 1754-5.

Barry was invited to Dublin, on a salary of 800l. and two benefits. Mr. Victor and Mr. Sowden,

were the desperate undertakers after Sheridan's abdication.—Miss Noffiter, (Mr. Barry's favourite Juliet) made a point of having five hundred pounds; and Mrs. Gregory (who had only appeared in two characters the winter before, at Covent-Garden; once in Hermione, and in Alicia twice; once for Mr. Sparks, and another night for Mrs. Bellamy), at three hundred pounds.—Barry on his departure from England denounced ruin on Mr. Rich by his desertion; but such threats were weak in the extreme: It is true, Mr. Sheridan's Romeo was vain and ridiculous, immediately after Barry's; but Barry forgot that with the aid and novelty of new performers, and Mr. Rich's never-failing support, pantomime, and with a theatre in London, (where the metropolis can pour in such incredible numbers) it must be the manager's own fault indeed, if he be ruined by the loss of any performer whatever.

Mr. Sheridan, by the great riot in Dublin, being obliged to leave that city, occasioned by the representation of Mahomet in February 1754; in which perturbation Mrs. Woffington was supposed to have aided, as a party concerned in *real* state politics, which certainly has not any connection or business within the walls of a theatre, that lady was also obliged to retire from Ireland, at the same time, with Mr. Sheridan.

It is one of the most remarkable riots that ever occurred in any theatre, and well worthy of being read by every admirer of theatrical history. It would be impertinent to introduce it here, as it must be well known, or should be, to all theatrical persons. Those who have not been made acquainted with that period of the early part of the established Irish stage, will find it all fully explained in a modern volume lately printed, by Mr. Hitchcock; a gentleman of great ability and integrity of the Dublin theatre:——It gives a general view of the Irish theatre, from its commencement, down to the year 1757, and will well repay the trouble of a little attention. I can answer, as for myself, that I often take Mr. Hitchcock's book up for information.

Mr. Sheridan this year came over, and was engaged by Mr. Rich in the autumn 1754. The season opened with some of Mr. Rich's stock comedies, very ill acted indeed, and as dingily dressed.

October 11, 1754, Mrs. Green made her appearance from Dublin, in the character of Lappet; a good comic actress—much the best in chambermaids, Mrs. Heidelbergs, &c. since the time of Mrs. Clive.

On Friday, October 18, 1754, Othello was announced, with an occasional prologue, spoke by Mrs. Hamilton, for the introducing Mr. Mur-

phy. (A gentleman well known and admired for his talents as an author, and many very respectable qualities; and often mentioned in the course of my Memoirs.) He was to appear in the difficult and dangerous part of Othello; rendered at that time more hazardous than the present, by the well known excellence of Mr. Barry in that character. Mr. Murphy had many other reasons to be alarmed; as he had long waged his pen of war as author of the Gray's-Inn Journal, and had been the terror of poets, and the scourge of players.

The novelty held out was a charm irresistible to attend Covent-Garden theatre.—Mr. Murphy's judgment, then or now, would be absurd to call in question; and I hold that gentleman in true regard; but on the stage, he certainly wanted, what we behind the scenes call powers, &c. *for great effect.*

After that gentleman's novelty of three nights, on Tuesday, October the twenty-first, the Nonjuror was advertised.——Doctor Wolf, Mr. Cibber (his first appearance for four years); and Maria, Mrs. Woffington (her first appearance for three years); which drew a great house.—So favourite an actress, and so well acquainted with persons in higher life, will easily gain credit to my account. She was of course greatly received, and played that character as well as it could be played.

On Wednesday the 23d of October, Mr. Sheridan made his first appearance in his esteemed character of Hamlet : Judicious without doubt ; but when compared to the combined excellencies of a Garrick, and the pleasing powers of the winning Barry, he was not by any means established from that night's performance as a darling of the London audience—Tho' in Dublin not any one performer whatever, even the Garrick, at that time would not have been universally crowned with laurel, as to preference, or perhaps equality ; but (as Mr. Macklin has said) that opinion had been jerked into the Irish audience from his father Dr. Sheridan the schoolmaster. He next appeared in Richard, without any remarkable applause till the dying scene, where he was equal to any actor, if not superior to any I had then, or have since seen, without the aid of a flounder-like flouncing, as the modern Richard's practice, to the great pleasure, approbation, and universal plaudits from the galleries. Till I broke my leg I was much attached to that tumbling exhibition and surprising feat-like agility.

In November, 1754, Phædra and Hippolitus was revived :—Theseus, Sheridan ; Hippolitus, Smith ; Phædra, Mrs. Woffington ; and had not any farce tacked to it, though a play consisting of five characters only. It was the custom on re-

vived plays, and invariable with new ones, not to have any entertainment for the first nine or twelve nights—it would have been judged disgraceful: nor did any play whatever intervene, unless from illness or an unforeseen cause. Phædra had not any success that year. Indeed, though the poetry is elegant, it is too learned and too languid. The performers and audience seemed half asleep, and the candles burned dim, unless at the following passage; which, with the advantage of Mrs. Woffington's figure and new dress, prepared them for the chace——

Come, let us hunt the stag and chace the foaming boar:
Come rouse up all the horrid monsters of the wood,
For there, even there Hippolitus will guard me.

After which rouse all parties on and off the stage, as by mutual consent, unanimously returned to their evening's nap.

Mr. Moncrife's Appius was acted that season, on the same story of Virginia, produced the year before by the Rev. Mr. Crofts at Drury-Lane, but destitute of every comparative merit, either as to plot, incident, writing, or any other claim to preference, and as to acting lamentably deficient. One speech of Mr. Sheridan's (though I never saw the play but the first night out of the six it

was acted) I never can forget, he delivered the following lines so energetic :—

O! by the gods! I hunger for revenge,
I thirst, I thirst for blood—for blood of Appius.

Coriolanus was revived with great pomp :—Mr. Sheridan conveyed a masterly knowledge of the character and his immortal author, old Shakspeare. That play drew several houses; but his OEdipus, Romeo, Zanga, Lord Townly, Sir Charles Easy, Osmyrn, &c. did not bear equal credit. Italian burlettas were attempted by a new set of Italians, but met with very little attraction or applause :—The first was L'Arcadia in Brenta, on Monday the 18th of November 1754; the second, entitled, La Famiglia de Bertoldi. Mr. Murphy performed Jaffier only between his first appearance and the benefits in March, when he acted Archer, Young Bevil, Hamlet, Macbeth, &c.

Mr. Clarke made his first appearance that season in Osman in Zara, on Thursday the 30th of October; an actor that must be at this time well remembered by his brethren and the public, tho' his talents were not strong enough to let him live long after death.

A Mrs. Glen also made her appearance that year in Rutland, Monday, February 24, 1756.*—

* I am right as to the dates of the month, &c. but

That lady I can only remember being apt to have fits on the stage—Indeed strange fits off the stage, ladies and gentlemen are often subject to—I have sometimes been so affected myself.

Mr. Rich revived Orpheus and Eurydice, that season, Wednesday, January 29, which drew crowds, but not equal to the Sorcerer, nor held in great estimation. That pantomime has been tried twice or thrice since then, but without success.

Mr. Poitier (an excellent dancer indeed) was introduced that year, and greatly admired: He came from the Opera House at Paris; his first appearance was on Tuesday, Dec. 3, 1754.—I do not recollect any very particular incidents that season.—Mrs Bellamy revived Alzira for her benefit—Zamor, Mr. Murphy: and the season concluded on Thursday, May 22, with the Constant Couple; Sir Harry, of course, by Mrs. Woffington; the entertainment was Orpheus and Eurydice.

DRURY-LANE, 1755-6.

Mr. Mossop was this year enticed (partly owing to an affront mentioned in my Memoirs) over to Dublin, by Mr. Victor and Mr. Sowden, to play on shares and two benefits; where he only

Mr. Clarke and Mrs. Glen's appearances were in October, 1755; Mrs. Glen's in February, 1756.

acted twenty-four nights, finding he could obtain more profit for himself by acting twenty than forty nights for his employers :—So in fact Mr. Mossop's great drawings *in*, was on the other nights the inevitable occasion of great drawings *out* from the treasury of that theatre. Mr. Garrick, from the unexpected loss of Mossop, engaged Mr. Murphy to supply that bulwark the other's absence had occasioned to give way. Mr. Murphy's first appearance was on Tuesday the 30th of September, 1756, in Osmyn in the Mourning Bride. Mr. Holland started forth in the month of October, (Monday the 13th, 1755) in the character of Oroonoko, supported by Mrs. Cibber in Imoinda. He was a shining ornament, and an honest, truly agreeable man, was universally beloved, but death snatched him in the bloom of life and improvement, and deprived the stage of an actor of merit and a worthy character.—He was too apt to *out-herod* Herod—by which false judgment (mistaking it for genuine fire) the big manly voice became too often harsh and unpleasing. In consequence, when Powell came in view, (tho' a suckling) he soon threw Holland at a distance, by keeping within the bounds of Nature and *true spirit*. This sacrifice of sense and sound (which I glaringly gave way to for the sake of catching momentary applause) would be less practised than

it is, would we once consider, that the opinions of the principal leaders of fashion in every place will influence the million in a great measure, and by them will be allowed, followed, and adopted. The following lines on this subject were wrote on Holland :————

When GARRICK, by whatever motive led,
Fatal to taste, took travel in his head,
Griev'd, for I knew the players of the age,
Griev'd, I foresaw the ruin of the stage !
No more, said I, o'erleaping vulgar awe,
Shall Shakspeare terror raise, or pity draw.
Catching the spirit with the poet caught,
The very pith and marrow of his thought,
Our GARRICK acted as our Shakspeare wrote ;
But now scarce understood without a note,
Of all his more than manly vigour gelt,
Holland must rant and whine where GARRICK felt.

Thus, anxious for the widow'd stage, my mind
With much too perfect augury divin'd :
Holland, poor man ! in Hamlet makes appear
What cause, what mighty cause we had to fear.
But though no acting-merit he displays,
His modesty must sure deserve our praise ;
Which, that the piece in all points should agree,
Desir'd that *Hopkins* might Ophelia be.

Athelstan was produced that year, written by Doctor Brown. Mr. Garrick did his very best to support it, and the play certainly had merit,

and was well acted ; but it never recovered the chilness of the spring, nor has ever taken root, budded or flowered, from that time to this.

The Winter's Tale, introduced with an excellent prologue by Mr. Garrick, had a very considerable run. Mrs. Cibber's neat simplicity in singing the song wrote by Mr. Garrick——

Come, come, my good shepherds, our flocks we must
shear, &c.

made little Perditta appear of the greatest consequence.—It was well cast, and the performance justified Mr. Garrick's judgment in so ordering the characters. Catherine and Petrucio was altered into three acts on the same occasion : Petrucio, Mr. Woodward ; Catherine, Mrs. Clive.—He threw her down on the exit of the second act, which had very near convinced the audience that Petrucio was not so lordly as he assumed ; for Mrs. Clive was so enraged at her fall, that her talons, tongue, and passion, were very expressive to the eyes of all beholders, and it was with the utmost difficulty Kate suppressed her indignation.—The first representation of these pieces was on the 21st of January 1756.

The Apprentice was introduced that year, January, 2d by Mr. Murphy ; who spoke a prologue to that farce, which was afterwards inimi-

tably and constantly repeated by Mr. Woodward in the character of Dick, in which part he was excellent. The farce had a great run, and still continues in full effect, and ever will, while a clever spirited comedian like Mr. Lewis or Mr. Banister, jun. has the Apprentice intrusted to his care and guardianship.

The Tempest as an opera in three acts, with recitative, &c. was introduced that season, with a paltry dialogue, as may be seen in the magazine, of Feb. 1756: Signora Curioni, an Italian singer, performed in it, but it was dreadfully heavy.—It went through with great labour eight nights, but not without the aid of the garland dance, well performed by sixty children, at the end of the second act, and the pantomime of Fortunatus, or the Genii, after that.

All's Well that Ends Well was revived—I imagine to please Woodward, who was fond of acting Parolles.—He revived that play at Dublin, and also when last at Covent Garden; but I never remember any remarkable success or pleasure received from the representation of that play; though here and there, it must be confessed, there are scenes of merit, whimsicality, and genius: but it never will be like the master productions of Shakspeare, a standing dish or an alluring spectacle to the public eye.

The Fair Quaker was also revived that winter, and was well acted, but the comedy of itself has not much sterling merit, and its humour and the characters are too coarse for the nice discrimination of the present age. However, Mr. Garrick made the play stand its ground from the good acting of Woodward, and Mr. Yates in Beau Mizen and Flip, and the parts in general not a little reinforced by the good and popular pieces the manager added as a support, and the new song of "Hearts of oak are our ships," by Mr. Beard.

The CHINESE FESTIVAL, at an immense expence, was produced on Saturday, November 8, 1755, (*by command of his Majesty King George the Second*). *—It was in the time of the war with France.—The multitude conceived it was purposely got up by Mr. Garrick to introduce Frenchmen to eat up all the bread, the beef, and the pudding from the Englishmen; and they were, by artful incendiaries, (which are never wanting to do evil) so inflamed, and the hydra-headed monster was so powerful, as not to let the presence even of majesty secure a decent representation: It was again attempted, and strongly supported, on Wednesday, Nov. 12, after the comedy of the Inconstant; but the fatal night of the Great Riot, and entire overthrow of the FESTIVAL, was on the *Tuesday* follow-

* See vol. I. page 73, for bill of the *first* night.

ing, Nov. 18.—Essex was the play that night, the Earl by Mr. Murphy:—The nobility mustered all their forces, drawn swords, &c. ; but the *mobility*, against reason and their own rational entertainment, like a torrent bore down all before them; Mr. Garrick's house had nearly been torn to pieces; infinite mischief was done the theatre; and John Bull was exulting with triumph. Some nights after Mr. Garrick advertised his performance in Archer, when, on his entrance, something murmured like—Pardon! pardon! on which he advanced with great respect, and as great firmness, explained how ill he had been treated by the wanton and malignant conduct of wicked individuals, both in his property, fame, and character.—He acknowledged all favours received, but unless he was that night permitted to perform his duty to the best of his abilities, he was above want, superior to insult, and would never, *never* appear on the stage again.—While he was speaking all tumult ceased:—It was indeed a calm after a storm:—They seemed so struck with the truth which he asserted and addressed to them, the propriety of his conduct, and the injury from illiberality and wicked wantonness he had actually sustained, that from the idea of censuring Mr. Garrick unmeritedly, they felt the reproach deservedly on themselves, and, like true-hearted Britons, burst into such an universal accord—

ing applause, as for several minutes shook the fabric of Old Drury.—Harmony was settled before and behind the curtain to the mutual gain and credit of all parties, as Mr. Garrick after that for years enjoyed deservedly the well-earned smiles and unbounded favours of the public; and that public in return had the happiness of seeing him in a constant round of characters three times in the week on an average—the first actor that ever did so variously and excellently perform such a contrast of capital characters, who but for this lucky accident, perhaps might have been lost, to the great regret of his admirers, who never did, or will, take him for all in all, look upon his like again.—Wherever there are many enemies, there will always be merit to create such envy.

The particulars of the riot, relative to the Chinese Festival, may be seen in Mr. Victor's second volume, page 131 to 135.

I do not remember any other remarkable occurrence that year at Drury-Lane theatre, except that on Saturday, March 27, Mr. Garrick gave his first performance of Lord Chalkstone (for Mrs. Clive's benefit), which had a great run, and kept the house open later than usual. The season concluded with Mr. Garrick's Benedick and Lethe.

Not acted these **TEN YEARS.**
For the Benefit of Mrs. CLIVE.

At the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane,
On Saturday next being the 27th of March, 1756,
 Will be revived a Comedy called

The LADY's LAST STAKE:
Or, The WIFE's RESENTMENT.

(Written by COLLEY CIBBER, Esq;)

Lord GEORGE BRILLIANT, Mr. WOODWARD.

Lord Wronglove, by Mr. PALMER.

Sir Friendly Moral, by Mr. BERRY.

Lady Gentle, by Mrs. PRITCHARD.

Mrs. Conquest, by Mrs. DAVIES.

Miss Notable, by Miss MACKLIN.

Hartshorn, by Miss MINORS.

Lady Wronglove, by Mrs. CLIVE.

(Being the First Time of their Appearance in those Characters).

To which will be added, a DRAMATIC SATIRE called

L E T H E.

In which will be introduced,

A NEW MODERN CHARACTER, to be performed

By Mr. GARRICK.

The Fine Lady, Mrs. CLIVE.

In which will be introduced a New Mimic Italian Song.

Part of the Pit will be laid into the Boxes.

COVENT-GARDEN, 1755-6.

Mr. Sheridan's success at Covent-Garden the preceding winter, (where he had not taken any benefit-night) did not occasion inducement from Mr. Rich to propose, or Mr. Sheridan to offer, his services.—Mr. Barry returned from Ireland, after the harvest of a well-fought field—and in his hand, Miss Nossiter. Mrs. Bellamy, then in reputation as an actress, continued still with Mr. Rich—also Mrs. Woffington.—She and Bellamy were implacable enemies.—Negotiations were off and on between Barry and Rich, till November, before any thing definitive occurred; and Mr. Rich, as usual, went dreaming on with Volpone, Way of the World, Country Lasses, &c. while Drury-Lane seemed as secure as if only one theatre was permitted in the capital of London.—However, on Wednesday, November the twelfth, Mr. Barry acted Hamlet, to a numerous audience, and was deservedly received with rapture.—But the loss sustained by Mrs. Vincent being the Ophelia, (a useful, but an affected actress) in lieu of Mrs. Cibber, made a woeful comparative play to that of Mr. Garrick's at Drury-Lane, with Ostrick, Mr. Woodward, and Ophelia and the Queen, by Mrs. Cibber and Mrs. Pritchard. In-

deed, the only person of sterling abilities, I can remember, in that highly finished character of Ophelia, since Mrs. Cibber, is Mrs. S. Kemble. That lady has infinite merit in a variety of playing; but where the artless, the feeling, and the impressive, to reach the soul is requisite, she, need not in such departments fear the most Critical Review; for her natural representations must live on stage record, and may fearless bid defiance to satire or *justice*.—If Sterne's Maria was properly introduced (as an opera character) I think it would prove lucky for the author to have Mrs. S. Kemble for her representative.

Mr. Barry, on the Friday following his Hamlet, acted Jaffier; and strange to relate, with so wonderful and so deserved a favourite, and in a character where he was so truly excellent, there actually were only twenty persons in the upper gallery; a bad pit, (and I may suppose many orders) and only two ladies in the side-boxes on one hand, and not three gentlemen on the other side. However, the season on the whole was great, as was Mr. Barry's success; though I now recollect his acting Henry the Fifth, Wednesday, December the third, (where his performance was enchanting) to much the same kind of house as I have mentioned to his Jaffier.

Miss Nossiter did not make her appearance till

late in the season; on Friday, December the twelfth, in the character of Monimia, which she performed to a crowded audience. Barry acted *Castalio*, so excellently, that he was the only one I wish to remember.—Some aspiring youth will smilingly observe, that when folks grow ancient they pronounce excellencies, and paint beauties of their *old* favorites which never existed, because those of the present day cannot contradict them; but I have proved myself far from being insensible of the high merits of the present race of performers, in many instances; and wish not, because I praise *Barry's Castalio*, to see him, were he now living, in the *Count of Narbonne*; as Mr. Kemble there is himself *alone*, and shews “like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw, and pleasing those that eye him.”

Alexander was revived with very great pomp, of which Mrs. Bellamy's books give a very full account, and also of her quarrel with Woffington.—It drew crowded audiences for many nights; was first acted on Thursday, January the fifteenth; where Barry really appeared himself the leading God.—

King Lear was revived also that year; in which he was highly received; and a critic pronounced, “To Barry they gave loud huzzas,”——“To Garrick only tears.”——

Barry, in the pathetic scenes, had infinite merit, and acted all well.—But the character, taken in general, was never seen, in my opinion, truly depicted with that fire, neatness, energy, quickness, and every various requisite, as by the inimitable Garrick. In tragedy, King Lear was his master-piece, (his Macbeth excepted.)

Italian Burlettas were tried a third season, but did not meet with success after the first year.—They had then the same set of comic singers, viz. Signora Nicolina, (*alias* Spiletta) her father, &c. as the two years preceding. Spiletta drew money it must be granted; but her first year she had been universally allowed the inimitable, the charming, the expressive SHE. Be it observed, that Burlettas had not been introduced at the King's Theatre in the Hay-Market; the entertainments consisted only of the serious opera, and the grand dancing; not any comic performers whatever, either as singers or dancers.—The first comic opera, was on Monday the 12th of January, La Comediante Fatta Cantatrice; the second, (and the best) was Gli Amanti Gelosi.

Mr. Foote, on Tuesday, February the second, after the play of Lady Jane Gray—(Lady Jane, Mrs. Woffington) produced his new farce of the Englishman returned from Paris.—It was well acted; was much followed; and filled the pockets

of manager and performer.—Mr. Rich did so well with Barry, Foote, and the revived plays, that he had less dependence on pantomime that season than usual. Mr. Foote shared the nights of his farce as Author and Actor. He performed Sir Charles Buck, and acted Sir Paul Pliant, in the Double Dealer, and other characters to help his farce.—His benefit, as the author of the Englishman Returned, was on the 8th of March Hamlet was the play—Hamlet, Mr. Barry;—Queen, Mrs. Woffington;—Polonius, Mr. Foote;—and was by every one thought a man of talents, but a very bad statesman. He was so convinced of his error, that the day before his benefit he resigned his place at court; and Mr. Arthur was his substitute for Lord Chamberlain.

Mr. Barry's benefit that year was on Monday, March the 22;—Busiris; with the Knights:—Hartop, Mr. Foote.—Mrs. Woffington's was Ulysses; and the Frenchified Lady.—Mr. Smith, on Saturday, April 3, again chose the Siege of Damascus, and acted Abudah.—That performer was known then and now by the appellation of *Gentleman* Smith, from that upright conduct with which he set forward, and has steadfastly walked in the same path to this day; by which perseverance he has reached the snug retreat of content: He was at that time rising rapidly into fame as an actor;

therefore possessed a double claim to applause and encouragement. He had supported most of Mr. Barry's characters the winter preceding; and his long continued good reception and deservings are so well known, that my panegyric would be futile and impertinent.

Wednesday, May 26, 1756, the season concluded with the usual old bill of fare—Woffington's Sir Harry; and Orpheus.

DRURY-LANE, 1756-7.

Mr. Mossop returned to his allegiance, and Mr. Sheridan was reinstated in his Irish government; not without numerous spies, and lurking enemies; as Barry and Mossop, on their trips, during his absence, had infused different seeds of discord, which rankled and kept up the smothered flames of party, and ended in mutual ruin: For (as mentioned in my Memoirs) Sheridan was defeated, and obliged for a time to seek refuge in England.

Barry at Covent-Garden, was sinking for want of variety of characters; he playing only in tragedy: (Young Bevil, and Lord Townly excepted.) And though he may be equalled in judgment, or inferior to some performers in 1790; yet his voice and countenance can neither be purchased, surpassed, nor acquired, *for the lovers*.—Garrick being reinforced with Mossop, gave his

company the undoubted superiority ; and the little tyrant—

“ Look’d, spoke, fought, and was himself a war.”

Barry’s novelty, was worn out in some degree, and though a darling of the public’s, (and next to impossible he should be otherwise) yet Garrick carried all before him.

Harlequin Proteus, or Harlequin in China, was the pantomime of that year.

Miss Pritchard’s promised appearance, 1756, caused much conversation and expectation this season ; her features fixed the eye of every beholder off the stage, the face was so exquisitely handsome. She was not much older than a young lady *now* a candidate for stage favour 1790 : I mean Miss Wallis. Her public merits, cannot, with any propriety, be here introduced ; as it would be out of all time and place, and subversive to the plan I have adopted and observed relative to others for the present publication. Yet I cannot refrain, for the credit of the stage, to be her herald ; and with the trumpet of Truth sound forth, that her purity and good conduct may challenge the breath of Slander, Envy, or Detraction ; and her undeniably good character is such, that the more it is investigated——

Like purest linen laid in open air,

’Twill bleach the more, and whiten to the view—

Mr. Garrick's *Lear* seemed to have gained additional strength, lustre, and fashion.—Mr. Shuter had the year preceding, revived the *Wonder!* at Covent-Garden theatre, for his benefit, which became in consequence a stock comedy. Gibby, by Mr. Shuter; who was there the leading character.—Don Felix, the hero, was execrably personated by a Mr. Gibson. Mr. Garrick revived it early in the season, Saturday, Nov. 6, 1756; and the play was so well conducted, (Gibby excepted, by Johnson, who could speak the dialect, but not act) that the play was perpetually called for, and relished as a perfect performance, particularly Mr. Garrick's Don Felix; and it was equally attractive every year, when he performed that character, (which had never before been noticed in the list of *capital* parts.) He valued himself on his reputation in performing Don Felix so much, that he fixed on it as the last mark of genius he ever gave; which was on Monday, June 10, 1776, for the benefit of the theatrical fund. On which night, after the comedy, he took his farewell of the stage; when more tears were shed from box, pit, and gallery for the loss of that truly inimitable actor, than at the representation of any tragedy, seen in ancient or modern times: Don Felix died that night, and I fear without issue to claim *true* right, and do his name equal honour and justice.

The Male Coquette (written by Garrick) was also well received. The Reprisal, and Proteus, or Harlequin in China, (by Woodward) were both well approved, but not very attractive.

Miss Pritchard's was a most remarkable first appearance, Saturday, Oct. 9, 1756 :—The partiality for her mother, from the most respectable and indulgent audience in the world, Mr. Garrick's patronage and tuition, and her own beautiful face, which was fascinating to a degree, occasioned curiosity in shoals.—The mother, (Mrs. Pritchard,) leading her daughter on in Juliet, as *Lady Capulet*—the tears of the young lady—the good wishes and tendernefs of the town, all combined, made an affecting and pleasing scene.—But that partiality dwindled away in the early part of the season.

Her second appearance was on the 25th of October, 1756, in the character of Lady Betty Modish, where Mrs. Pritchard had been often seen, and was incomparable, in spite of person ;—but the daughter wanted the mother's soul, her feeling, her fire, her whim, her imagination : which here plainly shews, that teaching and teaching will never do, unless Providence has given genius and nature to be moulded.—In that case the master may justly claim credit, and perhaps more than is his due ; but without that precious gift, *talents*, which must come from the universal Ma-

ker alone, no master can bring a pupil, (however learned) beyond a dull languid mediocrity, to public view with eclat.

I do not recollect more particulars that year, except Mr. Foote's producing the Author, which had a great run indeed ; not only from the good acting of Mr. Foote, in Cadwallader, (the outlines of which character he had taken from a private family) in which he gave great proof of humour, satire, &c. but from Mrs. Clive being not less clever in Mrs. Cadwallader. The piece had great success : And wherever it is perfectly acted, and the parts of Mr. and Mrs. Cadwallader are done justice to in the performance, that farce will ever be a fund of entertainment to all who are susceptible of true comic *force*.——It is not so local and confined as many of Mr. Foote's pieces ; but is so near Nature, (though extravagantly drawn) that the piece whenever done justice to, and a favourite actor and actress in the two parts, it will live on the stage for an age to come.

Near this period, or indeed, two years later, the stage was favoured with a new candidate for fame ; the eldest son of the late Mr. Fleetwood, formerly proprietor of Drury-Lane theatre.—His person was elegant and handsome : To his understanding and education he also possessed intrepidity with coolness ; and never, on any occasion, was

thrown off his guard, so as for any opponent whatever to look or speak to him but as a gentleman.—This was of infinite service to Mr. Fleetwood as a billiard player; at which amusement, he was by all allowed so excellent, that few would venture to hazard with him.—His well-known abilities were so highly rated by all who knew him, that great expectations were formed of his stage success. He performed Romeo, at Drury-Lane, 1758, as I recollect, on his first appearance; and had a grace and ease, that seemed not only to obtain, but command applause: Yet with all these advantages, his voice seemed consumptive, and his powers deficient; and the more he played, the less he pleased either the audience or himself, except in Young Bevil: however, tho' little accustomed to the stage, there was an ease, accompanied with elegance and native dignity in his deportment, that, take it from the first rising of the curtain to its fall, he displayed more merit, and gentleman-like judgment, than any first rate performer I either had at that time seen, or since, in that difficult first rate, and accomplished character.—Being ambitious, and of strong discernment, he soon found the *drama* would not answer in that style of lucrative superiority, at which he only aimed; he therefore in less than two years' experiment of stage enterprise, retired from the theatre, and engaged, (I have been informed) in an underta-

King in the West-Indies, where he has rapidly made a considerable fortune, and is, I believe, at this time living in that climate, enjoying the fruits of ingenuity and industry; points, which conjoined, seldom fail being the reward of talents and strong genius.—The Ambitious Step Mother was revived for him at Drury-Lane, in 1758, to perform Artaxerxes, but without approbation.

Not having collected this work from notes, but merely from memory, Mr. Fleetwood had not occurred to my remembrance, but from having lately seen a ridiculous situation on the stage at the York Theatre, from beholding Romeo's having a real sword, instead of a foil, to grace his thigh. A circumstance very wrong to trust to, even under the guide of the most cautious, as hurry, inattention, the stage furor, and a thousand accidents, may, for want of instant reflection, occasion most alarming accidents——We often receive hurts from our stage battles; I myself can bear testimony to an honourable scar obtained in Bosworth Field.—Bad fencers one cause, and blades, not well tempered, too often another, which occasion mischief; but to incur the hazard of certain dangerous weapons is surely neither pardonable nor sufferable.

I lately saw Romeo with a real sword, which the fiery Tibalt no sooner viewed, than he kept

not only a preposterous, *prudent*, distance, but fell down dead, without an attempt at battle. Another instance, was when Mr. Fleetwood, just mentioned, was acting Romeo, at Drury-Lane: He had forgot his foil; Mr. Austin was the Paris, and not knowing his danger, was determined to be courageous, and fought like a lion; till Mr. Romeo, who fenced well and elegantly, being determined to conquer, (in reality) whipped Mr. Austin through the guts *sans ceremonie*: Swords were *then* prohibited in consequence, and a severe penalty inflicted for wearing one on any account. Accidents of that sort were more likely then to happen than at present; as not any gentleman of the *London* theatres, when dressed, was ever seen without a sword by his side.

A misfortune of a similar kind to that lately mentioned, is that of the late celebrated Mr. Farquhar, who after being on the stage as an actor, obtained a commission in the army, in which situation he wrote several well known and entertaining comedies; the *Beaux Stratagem*, *Constant Couple*, the *Recruiting Officer*, and several others, which at that time, and the present, are in deserved high estimation: but an unlucky accident, in the year 1697, put a period to his performing.—Being to play *Guyamor*, in the *Indian Emperor*, who kills *Vasquez*; and having

forgot to change his sword for a foil, he wounded a Mr. Price, who acted Vasquez, dangerously, though not fatally. The impression which this accident made on a mind so sensible, and the reflecting on what might have been the consequences, determined him to relinquish a profession, which might, perhaps, expose him to like mistakes in future.—I have merely introduced this matter here, for every performer seriously to consider, that it is no reason, but that what has not yet befallen him, may, unhappily, at some future period, ensue; and not trusting to the hazard, is a certain preventive to the danger.

From the peril of swords, *permit* me to return to my stage calendar, and relate, that Miss Barton (now Mrs. Abington)'s first appearance at Drury-Lane, was on Friday, the twenty-ninth of October, 1756, in Lady Pliant.—Sir Paul Pliant, Mr. Foote.—Her second appearance was on the third night of the Wonder, in the Virgin Unmasked.—Lilliput, a Satire, written by Mr. Garrick, was excellently acted by children: And the season concluded with Mr. Garrick's performance of Lord Chalkstone.—After the play of Essex, Mrs. Pritchard's Queen Elizabeth, (from indisposition) was read by Mrs. Bennet, (now living.) That night was appropriated for

the benefit of a Mrs. Horton, a celebrated actress, for some seasons after the decease of Mrs. Oldfield; but I am sorry to relate, though it was on a charitable occasion, and Mr. Garrick aided the performance with his powerful assistance, that neither first nor half price gave any appearance of help or spirit to support the once admired Mrs. Horton.—It was no more than *sans box—sans pit—sans gallery—sans every thing.*—

COVENT GARDEN, 1756-7.

This season opened rather languid.—Mr. Barry's *Lear* was not attractive.—Alexander did something. Nossiter was the *Statira*; as Belamy was ill, and had broke her arm. Woffington was on the decline; but she never neglected her business, tho' her health, spirits, and beauty, were visibly decaying.—Two plays of Beaumont and Fletcher's, (*Wit without Money*; and the *Humorous Lieutenant*) were revived at a great expence; they were well conducted, and met with some success:—The *Humorous Lieutenant* was performed at the command of his present Majesty, then Prince of Wales, on Friday the 10th of December:—Also Mrs. Centlivre's comedy of the *Rover* was produced, and commanded by his Majesty—Altered this year, 1790, by Mr. Kemble; which alterations

were requisite: as in 1757, Ned Blunt actually undressed to his drawers.—The London Cuckolds was acted, (for the last time, I believe) on the lord mayor's day.—The Englishman returned from Paris being published, (as was ever the custom in those days—not locked up as at present, as if afraid to see the light) was acted, and stood its ground tolerably; assisted by Mr. Dyer, in Sir Charles Buck; Miss Nossiter the Lucinda. Bellamy did not play that season, except Almeria, for the benefit of Mr. Sparks, in March.—Mrs. Woffington that year acted Lothario and the Frenchified Lady for her own benefit.

That winter Mrs. Gregory's fame had increased so much in Ireland, that she ventured over to play on shares a few nights at Covent-Garden.—Her Calista did the most for her. She had great merit, and much fire.—Her Hermione was in some scenes very capital.

Mrs. Gregory, (now Mrs. Fitzhenry) some years after, tried Drury-Lane boards, and was intended as a curb on Mrs. Yates. This was suspected by Mrs. Yates's friends and the public, and Mrs. Fitzhenry's person stood no chance against the beautiful Mrs. Yates's: The Irish gentlemen were too sanguine —In consequence, a violent opposition took place; and Mrs. Fitzhenry, (notwithstanding her good character and great

abilities) was severely and cruelly treated: A circumstance seldom happening from a London audience.—But what will not spleen effect?—This had nearly proved of fatal consequence to her fame as an actress in Dublin; the ill report being *trebled* to greet her return. But real worth, and the high esteem she was held in by the worthy, baffled her enemies—She was soon reinstated in her former enviable situation of public applause and private esteem; and for years her emoluments were such, as to make happy the remainder of her days by a laudable and well-earned independence; and she now lives beloved, and feels the rapture of daily testimonies of regard paid to her unsullied reputation.

Performers of the old and new school may here take a hint respecting Mrs. *Fitzhenry's* good and ill treatment, as it plainly shews how little the stability of the best audience is to be depended upon: For in my space of memory I do not recollect a more favourable reception than was that lady's in *Hermione*; and though of their own London planting, yet malevolence, party, and spleen, wished to cast her public merit and her private worth, *like a loathsome weed, away*. Hence we may gather and surmise, it is highly needful we should curb our vanities, for every one has more or less) so as to prevent the over-

powering our wits: For the *entire* reliance on public favour, it is plainly evident, too much resembles trusting to what we judge the fast gripe of a strong slippery eel, which is vanished when we fondly imagine it is most secure. Audiences, I fear, resemble each other, in a more or less degree, all the world over; and have, like actors on the expanded stage of life, their different change of opinions, their caprices, and their contradictions. If that be really the case, and that they do not know their own minds, but are unsteady, patronize one year, and abandon the next, what a flaming *prudent* beacon should it exhibit to theatrical reflection to warn against trusting too implicitly to public applause, or of depending too far on our fancied or real abilities, as too surely the breaths that raise can sink us; and we who hold the mirror should recollect, that in the wide world's drama the ring of fickle changes are wholly comprised in that established ever-running play called *The Follies of a Day*; wherein all act their parts with applause, approbation, disgrace, or sink into *oblivion*. The stage, with all its attractive brilliancies, which at a certain time of life renders it improving and bewitching, (for in youth even its vexations are reconciled and connected with its pleasures) yet in its highest meridian, had I a dozen sons, it would be the last profession I should advise or wish

any one of them to adopt, (though I never would prevent genius or strong inclination in its pursuits for life) *so many are called but few are chosen*. My advanced reasons do not arise from a mean opinion of the art, (quite the reverse) but from the too frequent affronts (as observed in my second volume) its professors are often liable to receive from the supercilious and the domineering; and what is more grating to feeling dispositions, they are sometimes offered from those we have been taught to believe and look on as (what are termed) friends and acquaintances.—And surely it is the same composition of mind, the same resolution and courage, which make the greatest friendships, and the greatest enmities; and he who is too lightly reconciled after high provocation (which in a little time *I* really am) may recommend himself to the world as a Christian, but should hardly be trusted as a friend. The Italians (I am told) have a proverb to the purpose, which is, “To forgive the first time shews a good man, the second time a fool:”—For love once past is, at the best, forgotten, but oftener sours to hate.

I have been led to this digression by the having sometimes met with insulting superiority bursting with dignity, when, perhaps, such persons could not dictate a better letter than myself, (and that is bad enough every body knows). It certainly

will be admitted as truly provoking to hear those who are neither possessed of talents, wit, or humour, yet authoritatively (as arrogantly) casting sarcastic sneers ; but, as Cibber observes, the consolation should be, that such illiberal behaviour seldom or never proceeds from persons remarkable for good qualities :—And assuredly, such superficial critics should note, that it would be considered rude (not to add impudent) in a degree, were a player to tell an eminent brewer at table, (with a mixed company) that his last cask of small-beer was trashy or verjuice ; or the wine merchant, that his wine was musty ; or the woollen-draper, that his cloth was rotten : for such real accidents will unavoidably happen to the most ingenious and upright trader ; and there cannot be a more honourable or estimable character. The best mechanic is as often put out of his workmanship by an unlucky wheel going wrong, as plays, from unforeseen causes, are too often ill-acted. Besides, good actors and actresses are not to be picked or gathered as easy as hops ; for very good ones are much scarcer than pine apples :—Nor should a piece, condemned by one snarler, (*as murdering his precious time*) be admitted as a reason that others must think like him, and neither approve nor applaud because such a play or farce is condemned, and labours unfortunately

under the disapprobation of one or more overbearing and dissatisfied critic. And surely no great condescension even for the advantage of untwisting the features, if such flinty hearts were to yield, and sometimes approve and shew a benevolent face, as if actuated by *charitable motives*. I am aware (and sorry to say) that it is next to impossible to avoid creating enemies; and real judgment freely investigated, I fear, is more apt to err, and be warped in the wisest understandings, than will be readily allowed or admitted as to matters of opinion. But my experience leads me to suggest, that it is enforcedly implanted in our natures to be swayed by our interests and partialities, our likings and dislikings, and too oft we know not why. As for my own part, I have frequently found it next to impossible, when perchance, on beholding two entire strangers boxing in the street, or two game cocks fighting, but that I, impulsively, and, as it were, inconceivably, have felt a pity and a strong predilection in favour of one in preference to the other.

Ruminating on theatric usage has, however, produced one good effect, and affords comfort to my peace of mind, when I consider that (after a toilsome task of thirty-three years hard duty in the theatric field, with many hair-breadth escapes) I have been inured and reconciled to the

sufferings I have undergone from my fracture and severe illness, which threatened dissolution ; as its consequences has relieved me from the *constant* stage acting before the period it would probably (with consistency) otherwise have happened : And now I rehearse *solus*, like Major Sturgeon, and cry, “ It is all over with me.—Farewell the plumed
“ steeds and neighing troops, (as the black man in
“ the play says) for, like the Roman *Censurer*, I
“ shall retire to my *Savine* field and cultivate cab-
“ bages ;” and can say with Foote——

Not but there are who merit all my care,
Pleas'd to applaud, benevolent to spare.

And of such noble minds, (which are as nice in their judgments, as in their censures they are light and right) I of my audiences with truth can boast. Now like a truant (which I often was in my youth) and old boy like, I have stretch'd far beyond my bounds, and justly fear the rod of deserved correction due on coming back to my proper place, where I must, as in duty bound, repeat my task as well as I am able, and turn back from my fault of digression, to my account of the season at Covent Garden in 1756-7.

Mr. Barry, in the month of January, attempted to encounter with the difficult character of Ri-

chard the Third, and am sorry to relate, that he was lamentably deficient in every point in his representation of that spirited and designing monarch; the which occasioned no little exultation to his rival Garrick.

Mrs. Stot (alias Lefingham) made her first appearance in Desdemona, on Thursday, November 18, 1756, but quickly retired, and did not appear on the stage again for a considerable time after.

Mr. Rich's Harlequinade of the Rape of Proserpine was also produced, and attended with good fortune, as it filled the houses for several nights to the weakest plays.

Douglas was first presented in February 1757, and was well, but not greatly received or followed. Mr. Barry's performance was good, but his figure too much for that of the stripling; and he looked worse for the youth by having decorated the simple shepherd in a rich puckered white satin shape breeches, &c. Mrs. Woffington, in tragedy, certainly had great merit—in Hermione, Jane Shore, &c.—but the woe-felt grief of Lady Randolph, neither her fine person nor accomplishments, aided by novelty, could reach as Mrs. Crawford has done. The play pleased, but no more. Mr. Sparks was approved in Old Norval, but was not more

than tolerable. At that time I did not expect to see what has turned out so contrary—that Douglas is and will be, for the credit of the stage, a lasting ornament. The story is simple, natural, and affecting, its language elegant and beautiful; and the lessons that may be observed from many passages are worthy the attention and retention of the learned, the gay, the giddy, and the wise.

I will here drop my Tablet, as occurrences from this season begin my own particular stage history, to which volumes I refer for many theatrical anecdotes, either of others or myself. The Tablet I have sketched to a considerable length, it being meant as an informant for any reader of quality or no quality, actor or no actor, to know, (if desirous) in any year, from 1747 to 1757, what has happened either as to tragedy, comedy, pastoral, pantomime, theatrical revolutions, &c. The production has given me an amazing deal of trouble, perplexity, and labour. I wish all the materials had been in abler hands, I think something entertaining and improving might have been then collected; as it is, I can only once more repeat, that I am conscious of my own deficiency, and entreat for the many necessary allowances from the public, also from my brethren of the Sock and Buskin. I set nothing down in

malice—I truly and anxiously wish them all well:
 And that the theatres may continue to flourish,
 the performers be deservedly graced and favoured
 while living, then handed down with respect and
 pleasing history for ages to come, with laurels
ever green, is the sincere desire of theirs,

and the stage's much honoured

and obliged humble servant,

York, Sept. 1790.

TATE WILKINSON.

END OF THE TABLET.

VELUTI IN SPECULUM.

There I see my own FIGURE—

A FOOL OR A CYPHER.

A PREPARATORY.

I TAKE for granted that it will be readily admitted any matter *resembling* good sense will be more gratifying and entertaining than my accumulated work: I will therefore finish the combustibles (which have existed within the distracted book and volume of my brain) with a few letters from persons once on a time well known in life.—I have placed them so as to diversify, and shall be highly pleased, as well as honoured, should they be complimented with the acceptance of the public, and allowed to be passable and entertaining.—I have one plea to offer to my friends, that may (it is possible) prove creative of pity and allowance; which is, that whilst I have been thus busily employed, I have unluckily had domestic as well as numberless theatrical perplexities to struggle with, added to pain and illness, to disturb my mind; though (*blessed be God*) *not my spirits*.—It is my fate of place, and surely I cannot be in lack of troubles and vexations to make my blood circulate, when the happier reader recollects I am the *manager of a theatre, and a company of comedians*.

LETTERS.

LETTER I. TO TATE WILKINSON, ESQ.

“ I HAVE been reflecting this *half hour* (and
“ let me tell you that half an hour is a great
“ while for a woman to reflect) on the predomi-
“ nance of *self-love* :—The eloquence of De-
“ mosthenes, the orations of Cicero, would never
“ have been known, had they not been actuated
“ by this *all-ruling principle*. When the uncle
“ of the younger Pliny fastened his pillows to his
“ head and ascended the burning mountain, did
“ he risque his life for *curiosity* alone?—No—the
“ *universal passion* caused his death: And what
“ is love of *fame* but *self-love*? When the be-
“ neficent man rescues merit from obscurity, or
“ old age from the stings of poverty, what is his
“ motive? Why, *self-love*—If he did not find his
“ passions more fully gratified by *dispensing* riches
“ than by *hoarding* them, the beneficent man had
“ been a miser.—Why did Cato fall on his sword
“ while Utica was free? Did he die to save or
“ serve his country? No :—But to submit to
“ Cæsar, or to death, was the humbling alterna-
“ tive—his pride chose the latter. When Vir-
“ ginus murdered his daughter, was it from his
“ love of Virtue? No :—his hatred of Appius,
“ and his opposition to the Decemvirate power,

“ were his darling passions. When pretty Miss
“ confines the goldfinch, in an embellished cage,
“ and feeds it with her own dainty hand, is it her
“ love for the *bird* that prevails upon her to give
“ herself this trouble? No: If she did not find her
“ own amusements in its warblings, the “ happy
“ commoner” would be left to seek its sustenance
“ at large.

“ I think Shaftesbury, in his *Moral Inquiry*
“ *into Virtue*, has almost proved that there is no
“ virtue at all; that there is very little independ-
“ ent of *self-gratification*—And does not that de-
“ stroy its essence? I half believe, and till I see a
“ miser part with his money, merely because it
“ would make another happy, or a coquette cease
“ to adorn her person, that her rival may for once
“ have an opportunity of eclipsing her, I shall
“ hardly be inclined to alter my opinion. And
“ pray, Mrs. Baker, to *what motive* am I to at-
“ tribute your having favoured me with the crude
“ indigested sentiments I have just received? Why
“ to *self-love* to be sure: I like to hear myself talk;
“ (writing whatever occurs to one’s mind *is* but
“ talking you know); the thoughts were natu-
“ rally produced by a chain of ideas with which
“ they were connected. I am alone, and throw-
“ ing them on paper has diverted me:—Besides,
“ I had a mind to let you see I am not quite such
“ a trifler as my last might bespeak me; it began

“ with a loud laugh, and ended with a poole at qua-
 “ drille, if I am not mistaken, for I seldom read
 “ what I write—it is enough for other people to
 “ do that—Ay, and Heaven knows a great deal
 “ too much you say.—Thank you, Sir, that’s gene-
 “ rous—I love my friend should be candid with
 “ me.—The postman’s tap—a letter from Lon-
 “ don—one from Mr. Wilkinfon.—I kiss the seals.

“ Yours, &c.

Edin. May 7.

“ ELIZA BAKER.”

LETTER II. TO TATE WILKINSON, Esq.

“ I THANK you, my dear Sir, for your con-
 “ gratulations on my arrival in Scotland, where
 “ by-the-bye I have encountered more perils than
 “ in a voyage to the Indies:—not to mention
 “ mountains, precipices, savage cataracts, and
 “ more savage men. I was locked up for near a
 “ week in a village, dirty, dismal, and desolate, by
 “ a deluge of snow.

“ I think of quitting this town in three weeks
 “ at the farthest, and shall certainly pay my ho-
 “ mage to you in your kingdom of York; but
 “ not with the least design of becoming your sub-
 “ ject: all my campaigns shall end with this
 “ place, and my future operations be confined to
 “ my own principality. I am glad to find that

“ your theatre stands its ground, though you are
 “ so unfortunate as to hobble a little.

“ I shall let you know by a line on what day I
 “ shall be likely to see you. I beg my compli-
 “ ments to your amiable queen, and the whole
 “ royal brood. Believe me sincerely yours,

Edinb. Feb. 16. “ SAMUEL FOOTE.”

LETTER III. TO TATE WILKINSON, Esq.

“ I AM extremely glad I did not answer your
 “ last letter but one, because if I had, it would
 “ have deprived me of the satisfaction of knowing
 “ that my seeming neglect had vexed you ; but it
 “ was occasioned by my going to Aberdeen, where
 “ I staid three weeks, saw a fine country, made se-
 “ veral agreeable acquaintances, amongst whom
 “ were the Earl of Aberdeen, and the Governor of
 “ Fort Augustus,—“ though last not least,”—and
 “ brought home enough to make the pot boil.

“ Mr. Ross has been ill, but we expect him every
 “ instant. He has sent some people : Buck is one
 “ of them ; the rest never bore arms with *martial*
 “ *men*, and therefore I can tell you nothing of
 “ their prowess. You shall have a particular ac-
 “ count of all our state affairs for your amuse-
 “ ment as they occur.

“ I have had a very extraordinary letter from a

“ cousin of mine, who keeps a shop about ten
“ miles from London ; where he sells every thing,
“ has saved a good purse, bought land, and built
“ houses. What could the odd soul mean by
“ such a proposal ! Perhaps he thought it would
“ be doing his *noble* family an acceptable service
“ if he transplanted one of its branches from the
“ stage to the counter ! But it will not do : I had
“ rather be a primrose in the wilderness, than a
“ polyanthus in a hot-bed. A counter is by no
“ means my natural soil ; though to be sure I
“ might find some pretty amusements in his fa-
“ mily, and almost as many employments as
“ Scrub had : I might scold the maids, dun the
“ tenants, and serve in the shop. Do not you
“ see me with Fontenelle in one hand, and a
“ cheese-taster in the other ? Then how comfort-
“ able to be seated on an excellent new pillion am-
“ bling to London in a holiday-week, buttoned
“ up close in a warm Joseph, and upon arriving
“ at a friend’s house, pull off this dainty garment,
“ let down my cherry-derry gown, (my cousin
“ sells cherriderries) and my cambric apron, then
“ equipping myself with a cardinal three-quarters
“ of a yard too long for the fashion, and a rich
“ handsome black fatin bonnet, be stuffed into
“ the gallery at the playhouse, my own pockets
“ replete with gingerbread, shrimps, and oranges,
“ and my little husband’s provided with a bottle

“ of charming rum punch : If we can but get a
“ front seat how delightfully will the time pass
“ away till the play begins, surrounded by such
“ substantial blessings. The honest man does not
“ know what a favour I have done him in refu-
“ sing him. I suppose I shall have a few remon-
“ strances from some of my wise uncles and aunts,
“ (for I can guess who put such a project into the
“ man’s head, I am sure it was not his own, for
“ in the first place I know his ideas could never
“ reach from Surry to Edinburgh, though all the
“ cousins upon earth lived there ; and besides this,
“ he repeatedly assures me, *that no mortal soul*
“ *knows of his writing*) ; but they may say what
“ they please, let me alone to answer them. Now
“ you are grumbling at me for plaguing you with
“ such nonsense ; but what can I do ? You will
“ not give me a subject, and therefore you must
“ be contented with such as I can find.—O ! by
“ the way—what took you to York ?—You are
“ horridly provoking, Mr. Wilkinson ! but per-
“ haps I may find a way to be even with you.—
“ Yet, hang it, men have not half the curiosity
“ that women have ; at least they say so. You
“ see I have had patience a great while. Dowson
“ is at Newcastle ; he sent for the inimitable Rob-
“ son thither, and gave a very notable reason for so
“ doing :—he could not live without her. Let me
“ know (in confidence) what sort of woman Mrs.

“Roach is:—She’s here, and I believe will be
“engaged.

“Why do you get up Salisbury? It is a hor-
“rid play—the Novel is worth fifty of it. Have
“you done Cymon? It would certainly act well:
“I admired it all in the reading, except Urgan-
“da’s end:—no strong proof of its merit you will
“say:—But perhaps I had spoiled my taste for
“pastoral at that time, for I had just read Sid-
“ney’s Arcadia, though I cannot say I was quite
“so enraptured with it as when I was a girl.—But
“it is seven o’clock, and I have another letter to
“write; so adieu, without any professions, for I
“hate them; and I should hate you if I thought
“you could have a doubt of my being, with the
“most perfect sincerity,

“your unalterable

Edinburgh,

“and affectionate friend,

Oct. 21.

“ELIZA BAKER.”

“I have heard here, (but I do not much re-
“spect my author) that Mrs. Roach is indelicate
“in conversation; if so, I shun her like a viper.—I
“do not think there can be a stronger proof of a
“corrupt heart. I would sooner keep company
“with a woman of the town, whose behaviour was
“decent, than with a Diana in fact, if I could not
“discourse with her without being frightened out
“of my wits every time she opened her lips.”

LETTER IV. TO TATE WILKINSON, Esq.

DEAR TATE,

“ WHEN I thought that you had quite forgot
“ us, behold I received a letter, and a letter of a
“ very comic kind. Do you seriously believe that a
“ man of my age and *great gravity* will turn pimp,
“ and *procure* a young girl for exportation*? How
“ could you imagine that I would undertake such
“ a jobb when you have not even attempted to
“ make it *worth my while*? This is not an age
“ to expect services without reward. In short,
“ I must shift you from friend to friend. I spoke
“ to Mr. Alderman Forbes, (who is the Lord
“ Mayor once more) and he sent his bell-man
“ about, but he played me a devilish trick, for
“ next morning I had four thousand one hun-
“ dred and eighteen wenches at my door, to the
“ great terror of all my neighbours. However,
“ it has greatly raised my reputation with the ladies.

“ I never go to a play, nor do I know the per-
“ son of any one of them, and am told I have no
“ great loss. One Dawson manages the puppets
“ in Crow-street, and Mr. Ryder in Smock-
“ Alley. Sheridan and Macklin are here, and
“ have acted occasionally at high prices; but this
“ is almost over, as they are in the middle of

* Mr. Wilkinson had wrote to Mrs. Chaigneau to engage a young actress.

“ their benefits. As our parliament will be up
 “ in May, the town will grow very thin. In-
 “ deed we should all be glad to see you and Mrs.
 “ Wilkinson, and believe you cannot fail amongst
 “ us of having a tolerable bed, with bread, cheese,
 “ and small-beer.

“ Mr. Acheson is now in the gout, but will
 “ write soon. All my family join me in kind
 “ compliments to Mrs. Wilkinson, and believe
 “ me, dear Tate, your faithful,

Dublin, Mar. 13,

“ affectionate servant,

1772.

W. CHAIGNEAU.”

LETTER V. TO TATE WILKINSON, Esq.

“ HA ! ha ! ha !——Be all attention.——The
 “ highest adventure !——No—you may untwist
 “ your features from the *furl* curious, for hang me
 “ if you shall have a word of it yet ;——it is too
 “ good for the *beginning* of a letter, but it is a
 “ noble subject for the *end* of one :——I love to
 “ have a letter and a sermon conclude as a jour-
 “ ney in a stage-coach does, with a *smack*, and a
 “ *spirited tight flourish* ; or, as Captain Bobadil
 “ has it, with a *punto*, or with—in short, with any
 “ other phrase you like better.——How strangely
 “ have you jumbled together *Providence*, *work-*
 “ *manship*, *admiration*, and *monkeys* ?——Let me see
 “ if I cannot put it into a little method for you,

“ and produce a well-turned compliment. Sup-
“ pose *me* speaking for *you* now, and addressing my-
“ self to some fair lady—the agreeable Mrs. Baker
“ suppose. “ *Nature*, Madam! (*Nature* is a much
“ cleverer word in this place than *Providence* :)
“ *Nature*, when she formed your Ladyship, la-
“ vished on you her choicest excellencies, and
“ displayed the glorious workmanship as a per-
“ fect pattern of her art, and a proper object of
“ *universal admiration*,—a *sensible*, an *adorable*, an
“ *amiable woman* :—But *me* ! Lord, Madam, she
“ took a quite contrary course with *me* ;—the fly
“ gipsey made *me* a *man*, Madam.” There—now
“ it is in a much better form, and *man*—*man* is an
“ infinitely more suitable word than *monkey* ; that
“ is, when used as a term of reproach, as I will
“ demonstrate. A monkey makes us *laugh* ; a man
“ oftener makes us *cry* : A monkey breaks our
“ *china* ; a man breaks our *heart* : A monkey
“ plays his tricks in order to *amuse* us ; a man
“ sometimes plays tricks which are not *amusing*
“ at all : We *command* the monkey ; the man pre-
“ sumes to *command* us ; but, in revenge, we *dis-*
“ *pute* his commands, seldom *relish* them, and
“ *very* seldom *obey* them. I have often seen a
“ monkey, by a pat of its pretty paw, procure a
“ kiss and a lump of sugar from its mistress ; and
“ I have known the same lady refuse her hus-

“band a trifling favour, though made with complacency, and urged with politeness :—*ergo*, she thought the monkey the more deserving and nobler animal. You have so often and so strenuously disclaimed all attempts to compliment, that I dare not accuse you of it; and I fancy you will not give me an inclination to do so in a hurry, for fear I should oppress you with as powerful a torrent of nonsense as that you have just encountered with.—Would you believe that I have been asked by several gentlemen here (who profess a regard for me) to write a novel? They have promised five hundred subscribers; but as I choose not to lose the good opinion they have of my abilities, I do not intend to expose myself to the mortification of convincing them that I do not *deserve* it.

“Take care of yourself, Mr. Wilkinson:—Stand out of my way, Sir:—I have just mounted my *hobby-horse* of *to-day*, (I may be tired of the beast perhaps *to-morrow*) and shall gallop and prance, and frisk about at a desperate rate: I therefore repeat, (if you have not a mind to be horridly splashed) *stand out of my way*.—

“What can be the meaning of this stupid rhapsody? Lord how foolish that is now! Why if you interrupt me, I shall never finish my *career*. Bless me, Sir, “I never had a lover yet above half his age;” and pray let me introduce

“ the poor man with a *pomposity* suitable to his re-
“ *verence* : And give me leave to tell you, Sir,
“ that we ought to *respect* age ; that it is by no
“ means a subject for *ridicule* ; and that we must
“ *all* live to be *old*, if we do not die when we are
“ *young*. I make no apology for introducing
“ these sentiments, because I am certain they are
“ extremely *edifying*, and very *new*. However,
“ such offers do not come every day ; an estate
“ of 200l. a year, and my ladyship to have been
“ exalted to the Highlands,—a pretty mansion—a
“ paternal one—a little in the Gothic style in-
“ deed, but agreeably situated, and replete with
“ conveniences ; defended from the north by a
“ *hill*, adorned on the south by a wood :—as to
“ prospect there are neither *carts* nor *coaches* to
“ be sure, but a pleasant *heath*, (perhaps) a glid-
“ ing river, and the whole probably terminated
“ by a *very good windmill*.—I love *ruralities* :—
“ How comfortably might I have enjoyed my
“ contemplations amidst this pleasing scene ?—
“ But—heigho ! my perverse stars ! the idea of
“ *sixty-five* threw me into the horrors :—A hale
“ man, however, and not frightful :—But it was
“ impossible to think of him. I was extremely
“ civil to him though—(it is a whimsical air wo-
“ men give themselves of appearing *angry* with a
“ man merely because he happens to *love them*)

“ thanked him for his good opinion of me, talked
 “ of *decency*, shewed him my weeds were not half
 “ worn, never laughed once, and at last spoke
 “ *very plain*.—I know your *humanity*, but do not
 “ be concerned; I dare say my Highlander will
 “ *survive it*.—And so you call this concluding with
 “ a *tight flourish*, do you? Why, yes, to be sure, I
 “ do; but not half so sprightly a one as I would have
 “ concluded my *venerable inamorato* with, had I
 “ been mischievous enough to have *married* him: for
 “ I should have had a mean opinion of my *conjugal*
 “ *tenderness* if I had not led him such a *dance*, and
 “ turned his *Gothic mansion* so topsy-turvy, that
 “ after a tiresome journey of about a *month*, (Oh,
 “ it could not have been so *long* as a month!) the
 “ poor soul should have reposed himself quietly
 “ in the *urn of his ancestors*.—One *serious* word:—
 “ May the bare *thought of marrying* a man with
 “ the hopes of *burying* him be far, far from the
 “ heart of your *friend*,

Edinb. April 20.

“ ELIZA BAKER.”

“ My next shall be devoted to business; at pre-
 “ sent I have an hundred engagements, and am in
 “ too great spirits to attend to it—I must go—
 “ Adieu—Mattadores, and favourite every deal,
 “ or I would not give sixpence for it.”

LETTER VI. To TATE WILKINSON, Esq.

“ As I presume you are come from London, I
“ send to you to entreat you to turn your post-
“ chaise *immediately* towards this metropolis, where
“ your presence will be, (as it always will be to
“ me) most welcome and acceptable.

“ Some of the first personages here, with every
“ friend I have, have long since advised me to
“ wipe off a long score of old, and, I may add,
“ imposing and fraudulent demands, by taking the
“ benefit of the Scottish act of insolvency—I am
“ now at last about to do so.—This crisis will re-
“ lieve me of many untoward straits, in which
“ two large bail-bonds, which I signed for Mrs.
“ Bellamy, (who I shall ever mention with respect
“ and compassion) continually involved me. A
“ few days will end this matter; in the interim,
“ as the season here is now beginning when
“ money ever used to come into the house,
“ I know no moment in which you can be of
“ more substantial and critical use to YOURSELF
“ or *me* :—and that I may introduce your aid in
“ the strongest and kindest manner possible, I will,
“ when you come, tell the public, in whose fa-
“ vour I stand in the best light, that you visit this
“ spot to support me in my *temporary difficulty*.

“ I am certain, as Foote has not been here
“ these two years, that you will attract the utmost

“ notice ;—*but catch the tide of success*—I know
 “ you need no advice about the tide of kindness.

“ Often, very often, have I repeated the favour
 “ to myself of drinking the health you thank me
 “ for :—Now you have no need to thank me for
 “ doing what I am sure was meant to be done
 “ without your *hearing* of it.

“ I have a good company.——When Douglas
 “ was under difficulties, he called upon Percy for
 “ his aid ; and as Home’s prologue says :——

“ *For Douglas, Percy bent his English bow.*”——

“ So hasten with your abilities, which are arrows
 “ that never miss. I am, sincerely, your obedient

Jan. 21, 1777,

W. DIGGES.”

LETTER VII. TO TATE WILKINSON, Esq.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ BE assured it was very far from my inten-
 “ tions to *half* vex you, or to give you the least
 “ reason to suspect that I imagined you wanted de-
 “ licacy. In all my transactions, public or pri-
 “ vate, my chief objects are tranquility and repu-
 “ tation. I have no dislike to *money*, but if *that*
 “ cannot be acquired with more than an equal
 “ share of the *other two*, why then let money go to
 “ *the devil* ! for I ever prefer my *private* to my
 “ *public character*. Mr. Weston has a tolerable
 “ share of the last, without a grain of the first ;

“ therefore I resolve against all concerns with him
“ but when *unavoidable*.

“ As to that gentleman’s performing on the
“ 20th for Mr. Raworth, I can have no objection,
“ as I would wish to promote his interest rather
“ than slacken it; though he must be meaner
“ then I think him if he plays at York for *five*
“ *guineas*; and especially after your absolute in-
“ junction to Raworth to assure Weston, that he
“ will *deceive himself* if he thinks of GETTING
“ MORE. Let the transaction proceed upon that
“ ground, and I think it will be for the advan-
“ tage of *all parties*.

“ I resolve, if nothing unforeseen prevents, to
“ turn my back upon Edinburgh on Thursday
“ the 11th at noon, so as to be able to sleep on
“ the southern side of the Tweed; then I fancy I
“ may be able to come into York to a late din-
“ ner on Saturday 13; and, that I may not be
“ *smoked* by any of the theatrical gentry, my first
“ dinner there shall be at an inn.

“ You know my *forcible* characters as well as
“ I do;—you know the taste of the public where
“ you preside, and therefore make choice of plays
“ and characters that seem most advantageous in
“ your own judgment. I am told your catalogue
“ of plays far exceeds any of our theatres royal,
“ and if that be true, when we meet we shall not
“ be at a loss to choose.

“ Notwithstanding you seem to be tired of the
 “ correspondence, I am resolved not to finish it
 “ so soon perhaps as you expect; and therefore
 “ call upon you for three or four plays and farces
 “ that you would recommend:—in *London* I
 “ would determine; in *York* you shall;—the
 “ greater the contrasts, the more agreeable, I sup-
 “ pose, to your audience, yourself, and,

“ Dear Sir,
Edinburgh, yours sincerely, &c.
Mar. 26, 1771. HEN. WOODWARD.

“ P. S. Pray do not forget my compliments to
 “ Mr. Swan; and if you will introduce me to
 “ Mrs. Wilkinson a fortnight or three weeks be-
 “ fore I see her, by *Jasus*, my soul I should esteem
 “ it as a very great favour.”

LETTER VIII. TO TATE WILKINSON, Esq.

“ SIR,

“ I AM sorry it is not in my power to comply
 “ with your request, to send you the corrections
 “ lately made in *Hamlet*; but no such favour can
 “ be granted to any one, as I presume the play
 “ will never be printed so altered, as they are far
 “ from being universally approved; nay, in ge-
 “ neral, greatly disliked by the million;—there-

“ fore, no doubt, your country ’squires would be
“ for horsewhipping the actor that had struck out
“ that natural scene of the grave-diggers.

“ As to alterations there are few or none,
“ at least *additions*, which alone make material
“ alterations. I can therefore tell you, the first
“ act being remarkably long, great part of it is
“ carried into the second :—and the sending Ham-
“ let to England, and the grave-digging scene, is
“ by that means cut out ; and the introducing the
“ scene that has been long omitted, where Ham-
“ let intercepts the officer at the head of a party
“ going to engage the enemy for a bit of land.—
“ *That* scene restored, and the division of the first
“ act, makes ample amends for what is cut out.

“ No doubt Hamlet’s consenting to go to Eng-
“ land, and being prevented and brought back
“ by a miracle, is altogether absurd, when his so-
“ lemn engagement with his father’s ghost is duly
“ considered. However, as I have already ob-
“ served, the million will like, nay, understand,
“ Shakspeare with all his glorious absurdities, nor
“ suffer a bold invader to cut them up.

“ I shall be very glad to see you when you
“ come next to London, and at all times to do
“ you any service in the power of, Sir,

“ your most humble servant,

“ B. VICTOR.”

LETTER IX. TO TATE WILKINSON, Esq.

DEAR TATE,

“ It is now a considerable time since I wrote
“ to my good friend Sir John O’Carroll, and in-
“ formed him of all the misfortunes that have
“ happened to my family, and requested that he
“ would be so good to let you know of them.
“ As I have received no answer, I am really very
“ uneasy, particularly as I mentioned something
“ that nearly concerned his interest: I must there-
“ fore request that you will inquire about it, and
“ inform me.

“ I was in France near a year with my wife
“ and Mrs. Forbes, whom I left at Montauban,
“ and got home in June 1775. My poor ne-
“ phew Jack had been a long time ill, and was
“ then at Mallow Waters. Alderman Forbes
“ went to visit his wife in October last, but the
“ ship was dashed to pieces in Wales, and he and
“ many others were lost. In March last my dear
“ Jack exchanged this life for a better, and was
“ soon followed by his broken-hearted mother,
“ and your good friend my poor brother Ache-
“ son. You may easily conceive the distraction
“ of our family. My brother John has been
“ much affected, and my niece Hannah is, I fear,
“ in a dangerous situation from the immense fa-
“ tigue she had with her brother and mother.

“ My dear sister Forbes, could not support her
 “ loss, and last June she followed her husband.
 “ This is too melancholy a subject to dwell on.
 “ I know you feel for us all. Mrs. Chaigneau
 “ and Mrs. Acheson, (who lives with me) and
 “ all the remainder of your old friends, desire to
 “ be remembered to you in the kindest manner,
 “ and believe me,

“ Dear Tate,

Dublin, Aug. 16, “ your very sincere servant,

1776. “ W. CHAIGNEAU.”

LETTER X. TO TATE WILKINSON, Esq.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ If I had not a pretty shrewd knack at guess-
 “ ing, it would not be quite so easy a matter to
 “ answer your favour from Hull.

“ You desire to know if I had commissioned
 “ Giordini to give a particular sum (but whether
 “ to a horse, a man, or a woman, does not ap-
 “ pear) for this or the next summer.

“ Your old friend Shuter is locked up in the
 “ playhouse, and is soliciting a letter of licence
 “ from his creditors, in which number I find
 “ Jewel is included for ten guineas borrowed du-
 “ ring the last season: Fye upon him! I am glad
 “ to hear that your affairs prosper. I have a piece
 “ of three acts, not my own, which I shall give

“ in the month of May, called the *Tailors*:—
 “ The subject is a rich one—the dispute between
 “ the masters and the journeymen of that respect-
 “ able profession—and I think the author has done
 “ it exquisite justice. It is a parody of the best
 “ passages in the most favourite plays conveyed
 “ with great gravity in blank verse.—I think you
 “ will appear in it to advantage, and I shall be
 “ glad of your assistance. I cannot say I am
 “ quite so well as I had reason to expect: I
 “ thought myself obliged to give Barry a list two
 “ critical nights, which injured me extremely;
 “ but I am now better, and, except the trifle of
 “ a leg, as much yours as ever,

Nov. 3.

“SAM. FOOTE.”

LETTER XI. TO TATE WILKINSON, Esq.

“ I thank you for the florid beginning of your
 “ last letter but one, though I can neither admire
 “ the delicacy of the sentiment, nor subscribe to
 “ the truth of the observation. For Heaven’s
 “ sake, why should not women be as desirous of
 “ sincere professions as men are? Or why should
 “ not even an indirect falsity, told to the former, be
 “ held as scandalous as it is acknowledged to be,
 “ when offered to the latter?—Would not that
 “ man be thought the veriest *paltroun* in nature,
 “ who should draw his sword upon one who had

“ lost the use of his hands ?—What then can we
“ say of him, who by arguments equally *specious*
“ and *false*, shall endeavour to impose upon a de-
“ fenceless *woman*, who has neither understanding
“ enough to repel his attacks, nor a possibility of
“ revenging them ?——So much for *sincerity*, my
“ dear Wilkinson : And be assured, I have at least
“ sense enough to prefer it, (when it is attended
“ neither by ill-nature nor rudeness) to all the re-
“ finements which the most subtle politeness (di-
“ vested of it) can dictate.

“ I have had a miserable cold, or I should have
“ wrote to you *before* ; do not grumble at this,
“ for I am so horridly out of spirits, you may
“ thank me for writing to you *now*.——Beatt has
“ taken himself to his brother’s in Fifeshire, and
“ lives secured from duns, upon the fat of a lean
“ land. The magnanimous Staley was left be-
“ hind us in Edinburgh ; where he is employed
“ in writing madrigals to his own praise : *sad*
“ ones they are indeed !—Mr. ——— is gone
“ to Aberdeen to paint miniatures, which the ori-
“ ginals may *fancy* copies of *themselves* ; and Lan-
“ cashire draws beer opposite St. Mary’s Wynd.
“ So that you see our company is but thin ; yet
“ we have found our quarters here extremely
“ good, indeed much better than could have been
“ expected.—I am sorry to hear you are inclined

“to gallop—depend upon it, my friend, you are
 “got upon a sober demure beast, that will not
 “bear to be pranced with; take care then how
 “you put him out of his pace, for fear he should
 “throw you out of the saddle.—I have no in-
 “clination to make this letter longer; take it
 “therefore by way of *bon bouche*, you shall have a
 “full meal presently.—The conclusion of a let-
 “ter often occasions more trouble than all the
 “rest of it; therefore as I am vastly inclined to be
 “idle, you must take for granted, all the esteem,
 “regard, friendship, and affection, which are usu-
 “ally *expressed*, when you read the name of
 “ELIZA BAKER.”

“I do not know what you mean by your em-
 “phatic inquiry in regard to Mr. B——: He
 “is very well—but I should be sorry if you could
 “imagine me capable of preferring a new ac-
 “quaintance to an old one—or that there is a man
 “in the world, who has power to alter the *real*,
 “the *warm* friendship, which I have for Mr.
 “Wilkinson.”

LETTER XII. To TATE WILKINSON, Esq.

“If I had not been greatly engaged by playing
 “every night, and studying two or three parts,
 “yet I have an excuse for my silence, from the im-

“pertinent conclusion of your last letter.—*Every*
“*thing* must be impertinent in friendship which is
“not *sincere*.—For Heaven’s sake why will you be
“perpetually teizing me with the idea of my superi-
“ority, which, when you have said all you can, is
“but an idea!—I look upon *politeness*, (proper-
“ly defined) to be only another name for *huma-*
“*nity*, which can scarcely exist, independent of the
“strictest truth: In conformity to this sentiment,
“you will not wonder if I tell you, that the com-
“pliment you have paid me in your last is not only
“*impolite*, but *inhuman*; because I am sensible I
“do not deserve it; there is no truth in it: And
“can a generous mind suffer a more degrading
“mortification than from the having those merits
“ascribed to it, which it is conscious it by no
“means deserves?—Therefore for the future, a
“little more *sincerity*, and fewer your *professions*,
“I beseech you Sir.—

“You tell me if I come to York I must have
“many disagreeable things to encounter. But you
“may believe me, when I assure you with the
“strictest veracity, that Mr. Wilkinson’s conver-
“sation and *friendship* would enable me to bear
“them extremely well, without any amazing
“share of either *sense*, *philosophy*, or *good humour*:
“However, it will be some time before I can tell
“you my fixed resolves; but let them be of what

“ nature they will, I suppose you can have no ob-
 “ jection to my paying my compliments to your-
 “ self as I pass through Newcastle or York in my
 “ way to London a little time hence ——Adieu!
 “ —What satisfaction would it be to me, if I
 “ thought my arrival in Newcastle, would give
 “ you half the pleasure that it will afford to

Glasgow, July 13.

“ ELIZA BAKER.”

LETTER XIII. To TATE WILKINSON, Esq.

“ Do you know that our correspondence begins
 “ to grow extremely critical?—The people here
 “ wonder what we can write about so constantly,
 “ and really make some remarks which are pretty
 “ enough.—Your last letter but one was directed
 “ to Glasgow, and returned to me from thence on
 “ the same day that I received your mad one——
 “ both at the playhouse too—then what an uproar!
 “ “ Good God, Mrs. Baker! What! two letters
 “ from Mr. Wilkinson in one day?—both long
 “ ones too!—Bless me, what can he find to write
 “ about?——Sure you must have found him an
 “ interesting subject?—we always thought Mr.
 “ Wilkinson the idlest correspondent in the
 “ world.” What answer do you think I give to
 “ all this?——Why, as Lady Betty says, I hate
 “ malicious people: so in order to afford their cu-
 “ riosity all the satisfaction it deserves—I just raise

“ my eyes from the paper, and look at them with
“ a vacant stare, as if I was sensible *something* had
“ been said, but was too much absorbed by the
“ contents of my letter to know *what*——then
“ fold it up carefully, deposit it in my pocket with
“ great circumspection, figure out of the green-
“ room, with a “ God bless me, how extraordi-
“ nary ! For Heaven’s sake, Dick, hasten the re-
“ hearfal, for I want to go home and write imme-
“ diately.”——then returning——“ What were you
“ all talking of just now ? but I do not care what ;
“ *I am in that harmony of spirits it is impossible to*
“ *put me out of humour.*”——But as it would be
“ unnatural for a woman to appear *always* pleased,
“ for fear they should suspect me of artifice, or of
“ an *intention* to heighten their impatience for our
“ mighty secret, I sometimes sit fullen after read-
“ ing a letter——bite my lips——read it again——then
“ exclaim in a whisper, (loud enough to be heard,
“ you may be sure) “ Unaccountable !” And if
“ any of them pretend to rally me, or want to
“ know what is the matter——“ Pray Sir—I beg
“ ——upon my word it is very rude——if *you* had
“ met with any thing to make you uneasy, I should
“ not think myself excusable in teasing you.”——
“ Ha ! ha ! ha !——don’t you see it ?——And can
“ you blame me for playing thus with their im-
“ pertinent curiosity ?——Heavens send I may

“not drop one of these mysterious letters—for
“what a terrible figure would the poor mouse
“make if the mountainous secret should be blown
“up?

“I am very angry with you for your debauch:
“you think that is the way to establish your
“health? Dear Wilkinon take care of yourself.
“——I have a thousand things to say, which can
“be only said.——Mr. Bland and Mr. Didier
“are in the room, and have talked to me so much
“that they have obliterated every idea of what I
“intended to say. I am so bothered that I am not
“even able to tell you that you have not a friend
“in the world that esteems you so much as

Edinburgh.

“ELIZA BAKER.”

TO THE READER.

A Considerable mistake having taken place in this Work, my duty calls on me to explain it in this conclusive page:

It is relating to the *rank* I have affixed to the name of Thornton, and dubbing him Colonel of the *Yorkshire Blues*, where it was not right to do so. My being an entire stranger to the county of York, at the time I was honoured with the acquaintance of the gentleman alluded to, in my early part of life, gave rise to the egregious blunder; but tho' I have unfortunately lost my patron General St. Leger, who could have prevented my being so wrong, yet I am so lucky as to be set right by the favour of a letter, of undoubted authenticity, from a gentleman of rank and fortune, to whom I am highly indebted for his infinite politeness: it is as follows:

TO TATE WILKINSON, Esq.

“DEAR SIR,

“I should be happy if I could give you the
“least assistance relative to the matter you have
“wrote to me about. I can only speak from me-
“mory, and my then knowledge of the army.

“ I was at that time at Portsmouth. Sir Robert
“ Rich’s regiment of dragoons, to which I then be-
“ longed, was all 1758 in Scotland, except the light
“ troop, which marched into England on Thurot
“ with his fleet appearing off our northern coast,
“ and I marched with it, as Lieutenant, in Septem.
“ 1758. I knew Capt. Anthony St. Leger, in the
“ 3d, or King’s own regiment of dragoons, who was
“ then at Portsmouth with the light troop of that
“ regiment. I am confident there then was not a
“ colonel or lieutenant colonel Thornton belong-
“ ing the horse at Portsmouth, or in the English
“ service at that time. If I recollect right there was
“ only one field officer appointed to command the
“ light troops upon the expedition that went out
“ that summer against Cherbourg, which was Ma-
“ jor George Warde, of the 11th dragoons, now
“ Lieutenant General Warde. In 1758 every re-
“ giment of heavy dragoons had a light troop be-
“ longing to it, which were detached corps in order
“ to be sent upon those expeditions; so that each
“ troop had only a captain, lieutenant, and cornet
“ sent with it.

“ You are mistaken with regard to the rank of the
“ gentleman you mention. There was at that time
“ a *Lieut. William Thornton* of the 7th dragoons,
“ who was there, and went upon the expedition;
“ he was a man universally known and beloved by

“ every body who knew him : He had lived much
“ in the world, was very much of a gentleman,
“ and very sensible, but was rather partial to his
“ bottle.—I wish to be as particular as possible,
“ as I think he was the person you mean. He
“ was about thirty years of age, about five feet
“ eight inches high, handsome face, and well
“ made.—There was a circumstance happened
“ upon that expedition. Captain Lindsay of the
“ 11th dragoons was killed ; and General Bligh,
“ who commanded upon the expedition, and had
“ power given him by his Majesty to fill all va-
“ cancies that should happen in the army, ap-
“ pointed *Lieutenant William Thornton* to a troop
“ in the 10th dragoons, which he commanded till
“ they returned to Portsmouth, where Lord New-
“ bottle, now Marquis of Lothian, came to com-
“ mand the troop, being appointed to it by his
“ Majesty ; the 10th dragoons being then his fa-
“ ther’s, Lord Ancram’s, regiment.—The cir-
“ cumstance was much talked of in the army, as
“ Thornton would not return to his former regi-
“ ment or rank.—The latter end of that year
“ we had in our regiment a captain who died, and
“ Thornton was appointed captain in his room.
“ Thornton died in London in 1765. I remember
“ Captain St. Leger, (afterwards Major General
“ St. Leger), was very intimate with Thornton.—

“ Colonel Thornton, father to the present Colo-
“ nel Thornton of the militia, who was member
“ for York, used to be distinguished by being cal-
“ led *of the Yorkshire Blues*, from raising a compa-
“ ny of men who were clothed in blue in the time
“ of the rebellion, with which he marched into
“ Scotland.”

THE END.

FAREWELL—REMEMBER ME!

W. T.

ERRATA.

VOL. I.

- Page 21, Line 2, before *instead* read *where*.
 — 53, — 25, for 9th of Jan. read 8th of Jan.

VOL. II.

- 28, — 10, before *such* read *self*.
 — 33, — 25, dele *but*.
 — 130, — 21, for *at* read *as*.
 — 136, — 16, for *joy* read *jog*.

VOL. III.

- 81, — 1, for *promising* read *premisng*.
 — 82, — 26, for *Amicé* read *Amici*.
 — 166, — 8, for *effect* read *aspect*.
 — 222, — 10, for *Swetart* read *Stewart*.

VOL. IV.

- 5, — 11, for *vgazers* read *gazers*,
 — 13, — 25, dele *reply*.
 — 14, — 13, for *Aprice* read *Mr. Apreece*.
 — 52, — 4, for *received in* read *receive when at*.
 — 86, — 5, for *that's tortur'd* read *that, tortur'd*.
 — 112, — 3, for *Varniet* read *Vain-wit*.
 — 166, — 18, for *Macbeth forty nights* read *Macheath
 forty nights*.

ERRATA

VOL. I.

Page 1. Line 1. for "and" read "or".
 Page 2. Line 1. for "of" read "by".

VOL. II.

Page 1. Line 1. for "and" read "or".
 Page 2. Line 1. for "of" read "by".
 Page 3. Line 1. for "and" read "or".
 Page 4. Line 1. for "of" read "by".

VOL. III.

Page 1. Line 1. for "and" read "or".
 Page 2. Line 1. for "of" read "by".
 Page 3. Line 1. for "and" read "or".
 Page 4. Line 1. for "of" read "by".

VOL. IV.

Page 1. Line 1. for "and" read "or".
 Page 2. Line 1. for "of" read "by".
 Page 3. Line 1. for "and" read "or".
 Page 4. Line 1. for "of" read "by".
 Page 5. Line 1. for "and" read "or".
 Page 6. Line 1. for "of" read "by".
 Page 7. Line 1. for "and" read "or".
 Page 8. Line 1. for "of" read "by".

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Wilkinson, Tate

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